

No. 65,505

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

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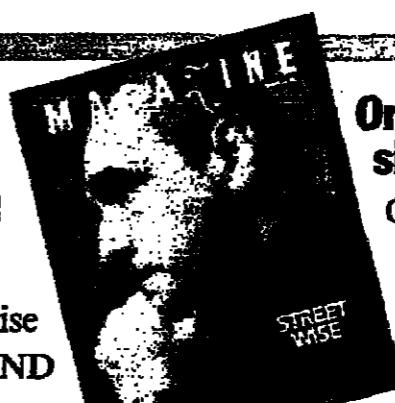


WIN A WEEKEND BREAK

£10,000 of luxury
British breaks
Details in
WEEKEND, P24

Sting in the Clinton tale

Peter Stothard
on the inside
story of the
President's rise
in WEEKEND



Original sinner

Ginny Dougray
meets Martin
Scorsese
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PAGE 8

Police raid 30 houses

£1m reward in hunt for IRA bombers

By STEWART TENDERLER AND RICHARD FORD

A MILLION-POUND reward for the capture of the Docklands bombers was offered by Scotland Yard yesterday as hundreds of armed police raided more than 30 addresses in the hunt for the IRA terrorists.

John Grieve, head of the Anti-Terrorist Branch, said the reward was being offered by "members of the community" and he hoped that it would tempt people in the underworld to come forward with information.

Hundreds of extra officers had earlier been called up to search some 20 homes in London and another dozen in Kent, Essex and the Midlands. A number of people were being questioned, although none was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism legislation. A number of items were seized, but police would not say if they included weapons.

Announcing the reward yesterday, Mr Grieve said that the money would be paid either to individuals or to a group whose information led to convictions. "We will use every weapon we are given by our communities to bring terrorists to justice. We know some criminals are motivated by money and we can all use that to get the information we need," he said.

Police believe that the IRA has been using sympathisers or activists who are also on the fringes of the criminal world to prepare the new mainland

campaign. They may have helped in building the bomb and supplied parts or helped to assemble the Ford Cargo lorry used to plant the device at South Quay last Friday.

Detectives have now pieced together some of the movements of the blue flat-backed lorry, which arrived on the Larne to Stranraer ferry last Wednesday night — although big gaps remain, suggesting that it may have been hidden somewhere.

The lorry was carrying a red trailer with the Irish restoration SIS/7 BJ which had been taken from another Ford Cargo lorry, which had been broken up. The trailer would have made the low-loader less suspicious to anyone watching the traffic coming off the ferry. They would have thought the English registered lorry was bringing back a cargo bought somewhere in Ireland.

The lorry passed through Carlisle on its journey south, then vanished until 8 am on Friday, when it was seen at South Mimms, the service area and junction between the M25 and the M1 in Hertfordshire. The IRA has used this service area before for meetings and to park vehicles for active service units.

After the stop at South Mimms, the lorry vanished again, but police are sure it was driven to another place and then moved one more. By the afternoon it was parked on waste ground in a lane at the bottom of River Road in

Barking, east London. The road is lined with industrial sites, warehouses and lorry parks. The lane is a dead end surrounded by lorry companies, a building firm and a crane company.

Yesterday one worker at a nearby firm said that the lorry was parked before lunchtime at a spot regularly used by drivers resting or waiting for one of the many yards and factories in the road to open. Lorries and trailers constantly go by, which means the low-loader passed with little notice. The spot could only have been chosen by someone who knew that the bombers could work without interference.

At 4 pm, the trailer was taken off the lorry and abandoned. The bomb built into the back of the lorry was armed and the vehicle disappeared westwards towards Docklands. Over the weekend the trailer lay unopened on waste ground until local workers called the police on Monday.

Yesterday teams of officers questioned all drivers going in and out of River Road to see if they remembered anything about the lorry.

Scotland Yard also confirmed that they have investigated a postcard sent to two prisoners at Camp Hill prison on the Isle of Wight on January 9. The card, from an IRA sympathiser who had served at the prison, bore a picture of Canary Wharf on one side and the words "Bang Bang" on the other.



Lucien Lawrence, 8, following the coffin of his father, Philip Lawrence, the headmaster killed outside his school, at the funeral at Ealing Abbey in West London yesterday. Page 3

Times man wins award



Britain braced for Arctic weather

By ROBIN YOUNG

BRITAIN is facing more Arctic weather over the weekend with widespread snowfalls and freezing conditions predicted for much of the country by Monday morning.

Today will be wet with strong winds in the northern half of Britain, but with snow confined to hills in northern Scotland. In the South the day will be mild with temperatures of 8C (46F) to 10C (50F).

The cold change is expected tomorrow when rain spreading from the North will turn to sleet or snow and strong north-easterly winds will make it feel much colder as temperatures fall.

The London Weather Centre said last night: "We expect temperatures down to minus 3C by Sunday night, with frequent snow showers continuing into Monday."

Letters, page 23
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Wildlife in danger from oil spillage

By ADAM FRESCO AND BILL FROST

SALVAGE experts aboard a crippled supertanker struggled last night to prevent an environmental catastrophe on the coast of west Wales.

As winds whipped a five-mile oil slick towards one of the most important wildlife habitats in Britain, plans were in hand to offload the remaining cargo of 136,000 tonnes of light crude oil from the Liberian-registered *Sea Empress*. 24 hours after she ran on to rocks near Milford Haven.

A clean-up operation was under way to prevent the spill spreading down the Bristol Channel. An estimated 6,000 tonnes of light crude poured into the sea after the accident on Thursday night. Several hundred tonnes have been washed up on beaches, headlands and nesting areas along the south Pembrokeshire

Author of US book exposed

A political columnist with *Newsweek* has been fingered as the likely author of *Prime Colors*, the anonymous novel about scandalous goings-on in a US presidential election.

The Department of Transport's Marine Pollution Control Unit yesterday sent seven aircraft fitted with dispersing spray equipment to the area. They were standing by to be deployed off St Govan's Head, centre of the main slick.

Gangs of council workers, contractors and Texaco oil company employees were involved in the land clean-up.

Last night the European Commission announced that a European pollution task force had been sent to help clear the spillage. Brussels also promised financial support for the area of up to £250,000, with more cash if necessary to help to save wildlife.

Tugs struggle, page 4

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WEATHER
ROSSWORD
AW REPORT

Australian drivers are just the ticket for Oxford buses

BY JONATHAN PRYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

AN Oxford bus company has recruited thirty drivers from Australia after failing to find enough in Britain.

The first two to arrive will be wishing passengers *G'day* on routes between Oxford city centre and the suburb of Kidlington from next week after their 27-hour flights from the 35C (95F) heat of Brisbane.

The recruits, London-born David Manchard, 48, and Joe Lally, 45, who was born in Scotland, said they were

attracted by the excitement and challenge of working abroad, but would lose financially by it.

Harry Blundred, chairman of Thames Transit, which has a sister company in Australia, said the decision to recruit on the other side of the world was taken after a fruitless British advertising campaign.

It was far cheaper to pay the £400 single air ticket to fly qualified drivers from Brisbane to train Britons. It takes up to three months to train a new driver, at a cost of about £2,500. The Australian drivers will initially be

paid around £250 a week, about £50 less than they could earn in Brisbane. However, their weekly earnings could rise to around £350 as they are promoted to the company's flagship "Oxford Tube" coach services to London.

They will live initially with colleagues, before finding rented accommodation. Several are bringing their families with them.

Mr Manchard and Mr Lally said the main difficulty was getting used to the dramatic change in climate, and complained about English days that are accepted in Britain.

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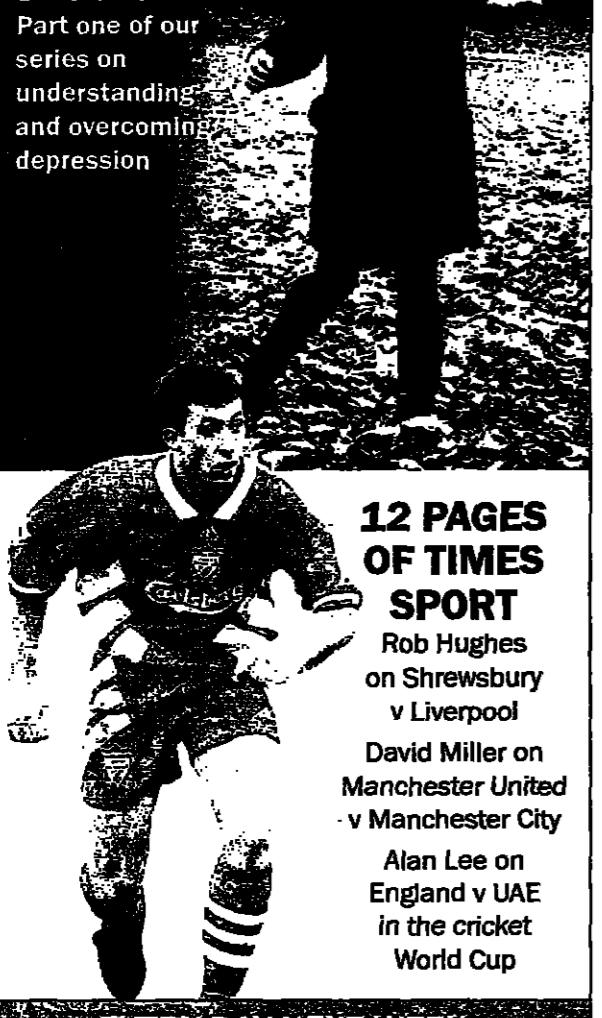
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DEFEATING DEPRESSION

Part one of our series on understanding and overcoming depression



12 PAGES OF TIMES SPORT

Rob Hughes on Shrewsbury v Liverpool
David Miller on Manchester United v Manchester City

Alan Lee on England v UAE in the cricket World Cup

EVERY DAY NEXT WEEK:
COLLECT TOKENS FOR FIVE HOURS OFF FREE PHONE CALLS

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE Daily Mail has been accused of bank-rolling Nick Leeson, the rogue trader who brought down Barings Bank, by paying hundreds of thousands of pounds to promote his autobiography.

The Press Complaints Commission is to investigate a complaint from a reader that the Mail broke the newspaper industry's code of practice by publicising its serialisation of Leeson's book on television. The commission's code bans

payment for stories "to people engaged in crime or their associates" except where the material "ought to be published in the public interest". It also states that rules should be applied "in the spirit as well as in the letter".

Leeson's publisher, Little Brown, confirmed that the Mail had acquired the serialisation rights "for free" in return for promoting the book. The cost of the advertisements is understood to be about £300,000. Leeson, who was jailed for 6½ years in Singapore in December, is

expected to benefit financially from the deal by way of increased sales of his book, *Rogue Trader*.

Peter Wright, deputy editor of the newspaper, said it was confident it had not broken the code of practice. "The Daily Mail paid no money for this book. We did advertise it on television but it is our normal practice to advertise major serialisations on television," he said.

Others in the newspaper industry have expressed concern that the paper has found a backdoor way of paying for

criminals' stories. Charles Moore, Editor of The Daily Telegraph, said his paper had refused to serialise the book. "The point simply is that Leeson will end up profiting from the serialisation. Whether they paid him directly or indirectly is not material."

Richard Addis, Editor of the Daily Express, said: "If the Daily Mail has in some way made Nick Leeson better off by doing what it has done, it seems that perhaps it has broken the spirit of the code."

Peter Preston, Editor in Chief of The Guardian and

under the code until there has been a proper investigation."

Rosalie McFarlane, publicity director for Little Brown, said that Leeson intended to use the £450,000 advance he received for the book, plus any further royalties, to pay his legal fees. She pointed out that book publishers are not bound by any rules banning payments to criminals.

"Leeson's story is one that needed to be told. If he had been a serial killer, we might not have published it. It all depends on the nature of the crime," she said.

Mail accused over Leeson's book



Crowds at the peace rally organised by trade unions in Belfast yesterday. Sinn Fein supporters faced criticism when they tried to join in

IRA faces anger as peace protests grow

BY NICHOLAS WATT
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

TENS of thousands of people in the north and south of Ireland registered their anger with the IRA yesterday for breaking its ceasefire. Protestants and Catholics stood together at peace rallies.

As Irish government officials held their first face-to-face meeting with Sinn Fein since the Docklands bomb, the IRA faced mounting pressure on both sides of the border not to jeopardise 17 months of peace.

Dick Spring, Ireland's deputy prime minister, led the calls for peace when he launched a campaign in Dublin to encourage people to wear white ribbons. More than 12,000 of the ribbons were distributed throughout

the Republic. The Irish rugby team, which has players from both sides of the border, will wear the ribbons today when it takes on France in Paris.

Mr Spring said: "White is the colour of peace and all people who want peace now should wear a white ribbon over the coming days."

His dismay at the collapse of the ceasefire was shared by tens of thousands of people who turned out at peace rallies in Belfast, Armagh, Enniskillen, and across the border in Dublin, Limerick, and Galway. RTE, the Irish state broadcasting company, held a minute's silence at 12.30pm.

By 5.00pm more than 36,000 had registered their support for peace in a telephone poll organised by the five Belfast newspapers. The

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Jewel thief, 67, promises to retire

Judge takes pity on ageing Raffles who lost his touch

By PAUL WILKINSON

A JUDGE took pity yesterday on an ageing jewel thief who promised to retire after almost half a century of international crime. Morris Spurling, known to interpol as Morry The Head because he is bald, stole jewels worth millions of pounds in his crooked career.

Described in court as a Raffles-type character, his life of crime began shortly after the Second World War when he stole from the jet-setters he lived among on the Riviera and the resorts of South Africa.

But yesterday, aged 67 and reduced to living in a hostel in Milton Keynes, he turned up at Teesside Crown Court with his bags packed for a spell in prison after admitting the theft of five gold chains from a shop in Thirsk, North Yorkshire, last September.

Gordon Nuttal, the Assistant Recorder, accepted his promise and put Spurling on probation for two years. Outside court Spurling wiped away a tear as he leaned on his walking stick and said the judge had been marvellous: "I'm a silly old thing, and it is time to give it up."

"I've never stolen jewels

from a beautiful woman; only from shops and warehouses.

The most valuable item was a diamond and emerald necklace in Rome 20 years ago, worth £500,000, then. But I have had an incredible life. I've got more stories in me than Hemingway."

Leslie Spurle, in mitigation, said: "It is not only in fiction that a Raffles-type jewel thief ends up in the south of France with a blonde in the arm and a yacht in the bay. You look beyond me into the dock and you see the reality."

But at 67 with no money, no family really, as he would put it, it's not worth the candle. It is a pathetic and sad picture. He is amusing, intelligent, irritating and frustrating. But he is not without hope.

Mr Spurle said Spurling had stolen because he was addicted to gambling. It was more than 30 years since a court spared him jail. He had spent 41 of his last 45 years behind bars. "He has realised that if he does not stop offending, then all he has left is his final years as a guest of Her Majesty."

"He ought to take up smoking a pipe, buy a pair of carpet slippers and leave other people's jewellery alone."

The judge told Spurling "I am going to take what must be regarded as a wholly exceptional course and if I am going to attract criticism for that I am going to have to endure it, but I am going to give you that chance at your time of life."

Spurling was caught on a security video in the jewellers. By chance the policeman sent to the shop had stopped Spurling earlier that morning for a motoring offence and noted the registration number of his rented car.

Jane Waugh, for the prosecution, said Spurling was jailed for six years in Nice in 1964 for jewel thefts and banished from there for two years. In 1970 he was jailed for five years at the Middlesex Assize Sessions for stealing 56 rings and a brooch and obtaining gold and silver watches by deception.

In 1975 he was jailed for nine years in Johannesburg for stealing diamonds then worth £400,000. He was also jailed in Brussels for jewel thefts. His last conviction was 12 months jail imposed at Exeter in 1994, his first in 1950.

"He ought to take up smoking a pipe, buy a pair of carpet



St Jerome in the Wilderness, the only Dürer oil in British private hands

£10m needed to save Dürer's gem for nation

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge has been told to find £10 million to save one of Dürer's greatest masterpieces, *St Jerome in the Wilderness*.

Fitzwilliam, Duncan Robinson, the Fitzwilliam's director, said: "This is a picture that shouldn't leave the country. The word 'jewel' always comes to mind. It's a gem of a picture. The paint is as fresh as the day it was applied. The colours have a vibrancy. It is as dazzling as a most spectacular illuminated manuscript."

It has been suggested that if the painting came on to the open market, it could fetch £15 million. A private treaty sale with its tax concessions, would enable the Fitzwilliam to acquire it for less.

Mr Robinson said: "We are not likely to raise it from our own funds unless there is massive public support." The museum is approaching heritage bodies for help. The National Art Collections Fund, the leading art charity, has donated about £300,000. A spokeswoman said: "We regard this as a unique possibility. How often do paintings by Dürer come up for sale?"

The museum fears that, unless it can raise the money, American and German collections in particular would put up a hard fight to acquire a Dürer. Scholars are mystified by the image on the reverse of the panel, which shows a yellow fireball in the sky.

Dürer, who would have been 23 or 24, was in Venice studying the Italian masters at the time. Their influence would explain the original attribution to an Italian artist.



Stabbed head was my daddy, boy tells funeral

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE eight-year-old son of Philip Lawrence, the headmaster who was killed outside his school, led mourners in prayer at the funeral service yesterday.

The top of Lucien Lawrence's red head was just visible above the lectern where his father used to read the epistle at Sunday Mass in Ealing Abbey, west London.

"God in heaven, help us to think for a minute about the time when we all met my daddy," he said. "Help us to think of his kindness. Not only was he headmaster but he was my daddy too."

I remember the time he bought me something; even though it was too expensive, the time he learnt me to spell words, how gentle he was. We played football in the hallway even when he had lots of work to do. Loving God, help us to pray that we will meet my daddy again."

Lucien's older sister Unity, in her bidding prayers at the Requiem Mass, linked the end of the IRA ceasefire with the violent death of her father. "This week has shown us a world in which peace is fragile and promises are broken," she said. "May we always be true to ourselves so that we may live with one another in peace and unity."

Frances Lawrence, the headmaster's widow, read from the first letter of St John: "In love there is no room for fear, but perfect love drives out fear, and whoever is afraid has not come to perfection in love."

Michael Hopley, the family's parish priest, said Mrs Lawrence had chosen the reading because it underlined some of the affection Mr Lawrence held towards her and their four children: Maroushka, 21, Myfanwy, 17, Unity, 13, and Lucien. "Philip

first met Frances when they were both teaching here at St Benedict's School. That's the girl I'm going to marry" became a fulfilled prophecy in 1973. Last Saturday they would have celebrated their 23rd wedding anniversary," said Father Michael.

In one of the thousands of letters that Frances received, a parent quoted his eight-year-old son, "Dad, what Philip did is like Jesus did, isn't it?"

The family remained composed throughout although some in the congregation sobbed as Myfanwy played Faure's plaintive *Elegie* as a cello solo.

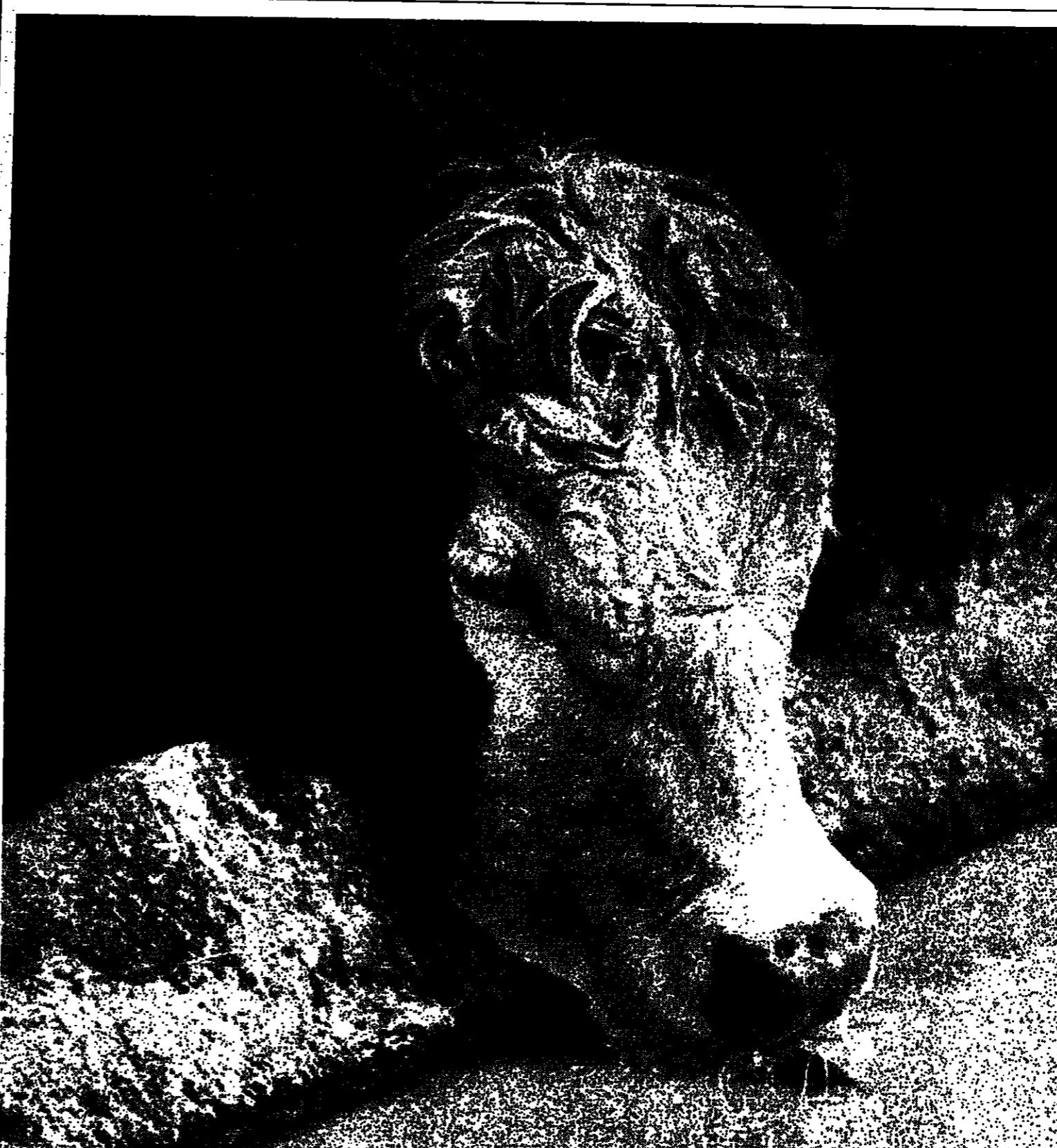
Before the funeral service, as the family arrived on the steps of the abbey, Mrs Lawrence, in a long, dark brown coat and carrying a posy of red roses, handed a single flower to each of her children.

They walked slowly up the aisle of the 19th-century church and each placed a rose on the coffin, which had been waiting in front of the altar.

After Mass, Lucien was given the bunch of roses to carry out of the abbey before his father was interred.

Policemen saluted as two bishops, an abbot, the Mayor of Ealing, the local MP, several headmasters, 300 mourners, his mother and three big sisters were led out of church by a striding little boy in his best jacket and trousers, now the man of the family.

A 15-year-old boy has been charged with murdering Mr Lawrence last December and a boy aged 14 is accused of conspiracy to wound another 14-year-old boy. An appeal to help the Lawrences and create a memorial has raised £112,000. Donations to The Philip Lawrence Memorial Fund should be sent to Ealing Abbey, Charlbury Grove, London W5 2DY.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Cherie powerful talent

Equity in move to bar 'black' Brando'

By DALYA ALBERGE

THE actors' union Equity is trying to block a Trinidadian actor, described by Sir Peter Hall as a "black Marlon Brando", from appearing at the National Theatre because they say the role could be taken by a British actor.

Sir Peter said that Michael Cherie, 24, was an extraordinarily powerful talent. "He is extremely witty and dangerous on screen. The camera loves him. I would love to see him work at the National or Royal Shakespeare Company." He intended to cast Cherie in his National Theatre production of *Oedipus*.

Equity, however, is not convinced that none of its 42,000 members could have taken the role. The union represents a profession in which 25 per cent of members did not work last year and only 12 per cent were employed for more than 40 weeks.

An Equity spokesman said the union had advised the Department of Employment that a permit should not be issued because there was no evidence that any attempt had been made to find an actor in Britain. The union is waiting for more evidence from Sir Peter, who says that he and his casting director looked at 100 actors before casting Cherie.

being involved in the management of a company for eight years, Marshall, now 24, ignored the ruling and set up new companies, disguising his involvement.

Last December, he was found guilty of being concerned in the management of four companies, Total Technology, PC Express, Total Computers, and ICRG, based in Aberdeen. He was also found guilty of extorting £3,000 in cheques from two directors, Kenneth Holmes and Stephen Canvey. Yesterday the Aberdeen Sheriff, Robert McCallum, said that the offences were serious, but did not warrant a prison sentence.

Later Marshall said he was glad to avoid jail, but described his business failure as a "large regret". He had no intention of holding directorships when his ban expires in six years: "The last year has been one heck of a strain. I now want to lead a quiet life and get back to normality."

Marshall, left Aberdeen Grammar School at 16 and set up his first computer company. By 18 he was managing director of three. But soaring costs caught up with him. He took orders but could not supply the equipment.

Fallen computer whiz-kid logs off after avoiding jail

By STEPHEN FARRELL

A FORMER schoolboy prodigy who set up his own computer company at the age of 16 decided his eight-year business career over yesterday, after narrowly avoiding jail for extorting and managing companies while bankrupt.

Gary Marshall, who owned a Lotus at 17 before he could even drive, was fined £2,000 and ordered to carry out 240 hours of community service. It was his second court appearance within two years.

His business empire had collapsed in 1994 with debts of £250,000, and creditors won a court order banning him from

afl

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

HOME NEWS 5

MPs back tougher action against noisy neighbours

BY ALICE THOMSON
POLITICAL REPORTER

ROWDY neighbours face £40 fines and the confiscation of hi-fi equipment if they refuse to tone down night-time revelry under a Bill supported by the Commons yesterday.

The Private Member's Bill, which clamps down on loud noise between 11pm and 7am and will apply to sounds ranging from music systems to domestic machinery, was given an unopposed second reading. Noise must exceed 35 decibels when measured in the complainant's house.

First-time offenders will be given a £40 spot fine and persistent offenders will be fined a maximum £1,000. They could also lose their CD and record collections as well as stereo systems.

James Clappison, a junior Environment Minister, said the Government considered the Bill an important piece of social legislation. He said 35 decibels was equivalent to the noise experienced in the front bedroom of a house on a busy suburban road at night.

All sides of the House welcomed the move although

most backbenchers thought the Bill should have been more punitive. They agreed that they had received far more letters complaining about noisy neighbours than they had about the Scott inquiry. Labour said the £40 fine would not be a strong enough deterrent for many inconsiderate neighbours.

Harry Greenway, the Tory backbencher who introduced the Bill, said it was not a killjoy measure and people could still hold parties, they would just have to be more

Patrols monitor front line

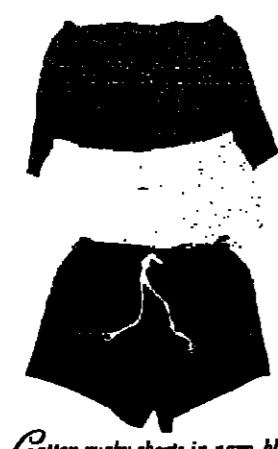
THERE were 151,553 complaints about domestic noise logged by environmental health officers in 1993-94, equivalent to 3,465 noisy households for every million households. However, there were only 500 prosecutions and 400 convictions. The Bill will make it easier to penalise the noisy.

One hundred and eighty local authorities have already set up out-of-hours complaints services, including 36 that run round the clock.

Westminster in London spends £800,000 a year on its service and prosecutes about one noisy household a week.

According to John Connell of the Noise Abatement Society, the life of a noise patrolman is a dangerous one. "There is a serious risk of violence," he said. "They have been held hostage and threatened with death. One had his nose cut off. They are dedicated frontline troops." Westminster has bought anti-stab jackets for its patrols.

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'NHS let us down in time of need'

Cancer unit stops treating terminally ill to save money

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A CANCER centre is turning away terminally ill patients and concentrating on those it has some chance of curing because it is short of money. At least 40 patients a week are being refused radiotherapy or chemotherapy at the Bristol oncology centre, which is part of Bristol Royal Infirmary.

Dr Victor Barley, the centre's clinical director, described the situation as "tragic and frustrating". He said yesterday: "We are unable to treat a number of patients, mainly those in pain with widespread cancer who would normally benefit from radiotherapy or chemotherapy. Instead, their GPs have to give them morphine at home, which we believe gives patients a poorer quality of life."

"We are not stopping treatment altogether. We are giving priority to those who need treatment urgently and where a cure is possible." Dr Barley said the restriction had been in place for a fortnight.

One of those refused admission is Janet Ricketts, 37, who has suffered a recurrence of ovarian cancer. Mrs Ricketts's GP, Dr Mervyn McGowan, said he had visited her at home and found her doubled up on the floor in her mother's arms.

"She was in dreadful pain despite the morphine I had given her. She is a lady who has coped with an incredible amount in her life. I felt she needed to be admitted as an emergency to an oncology bed and the consultant I tele-

phoned agreed but he said he hadn't got a bed.

"I said it was crazy. She is the most uncomplaining lady I know and she wasn't going to make a fuss but I was indignant. I am a plodding person but this got to me and I felt I couldn't tolerate it."

Mrs Ricketts's mother, Margery Peters, 65, said: "As a carer, and as a mother, I feel very angry. I also feel that the NHS has let us down at our time of need. The message sent out is that if you fall ill at the end of the financial year you just don't get the treatment you need."

Dr Barley said Mrs Ricketts should have been admitted. "It would have been more satisfactory for her to come in and her pain would have been more quickly dealt with."

He said the centre was treating 25 per cent more patients than a year ago, when it treated 1,300 in-patients and 2,400 day cases, and was facing a shortfall of £500,000.

A ward had been closed, one of five linear accelerators (radiotherapy machines) taken out of service and staff posts left unfilled to cut spending. He said the increase in referrals was the result of the rising incidence of cancer in the ageing population, advances allowing more patients to be treated and a trend for general surgeons to refer more patients to specialist units.

"This is not a sudden problem. It has been happening for years in every oncology unit in the country," Dr Barley said.

Pamela Charlwood, chief executive of Avon District Health Authority, said it had increased its £4.7 million allocation to the centre by £400,000 this year and could afford no more.

"This is a problem created by the potential of the NHS to do so much more for so many people. The doctors are having to restrict eligibility for treatment to those for whom they can do most. That means palliative care has to be provided in the community."

"No one believes it is an ideal situation but we do not have unlimited funds. The

Barley described the situation as "tragic".

Scots drop table of hospital fatalities

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE Government published survival figures yesterday for patients treated for heart attacks and strokes in Scottish hospitals instead of the so-called death league tables.

The statistics released by the Scottish Office record the number of patients who were alive 30 days after receiving emergency treatment in particular hospitals. The first such report, published in December 1994, compared the number of people who had not survived.

Dr Robert Kendall, Scotland's Chief Medical Officer, said they had decided to change the emphasis. "Survival is really what matters. It seemed more logical," he said.

Scottish health chiefs emphasised that the figures were intended for doctors and clinicians to compare performance of hospitals and to decide if they had to make changes in their practices.

Hospitals in Edinburgh, Fife and Argyll had a comparatively high percentage of patients in emergency read-

missions within a month of being discharged after treatment, the figures show. At Argyll and Bute NHS Trust, 13.89 per cent of patients were back within 28 days between October 1991 and October 1994.

At Fife Healthcare Trust the figure was 13.56 per cent while at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh it was 13.82 per cent.

Overall 72,947 patients were taken back to Scottish hospitals within 28 days, 11.13 per cent of the 655,372 who had been treated in an adult medical specialty.

Bellshill and Monklands NHS Trust Hospitals in Lanarkshire had the highest proportion of deaths within 30 days of admission for heart attacks. The survival rate was 74.38 per cent, compared with the Scottish average of 79.84 per cent.

The highest survival rate was at Borders General Hospital NHS Trust, at 84.31 per cent, followed by Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, with 83.85 per cent.

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Virginia Bottomley leaving the High Court after giving evidence in a libel case

Bottomley denies framing doctor over man's death

By MICHAEL HORNELL

VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY told a libel jury yesterday it was "complete nonsense" to suggest she had framed a consultant over a patient's death to deflect attention from a shortage of hospital beds.

The former Health Secretary was called to give evidence at the High Court on behalf of Mirror Group Newspapers, which is fighting an action brought by Anthony Percy, consultant orthopaedic surgeon at Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, southeast London. Mrs Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, denied that she tried to make a "sacrificial lamb" of Mr Percy, who was called "Dr Dolittle" in the Daily Mirror after he failed to attend a man with brain injuries who was then flown 200 miles for treatment.

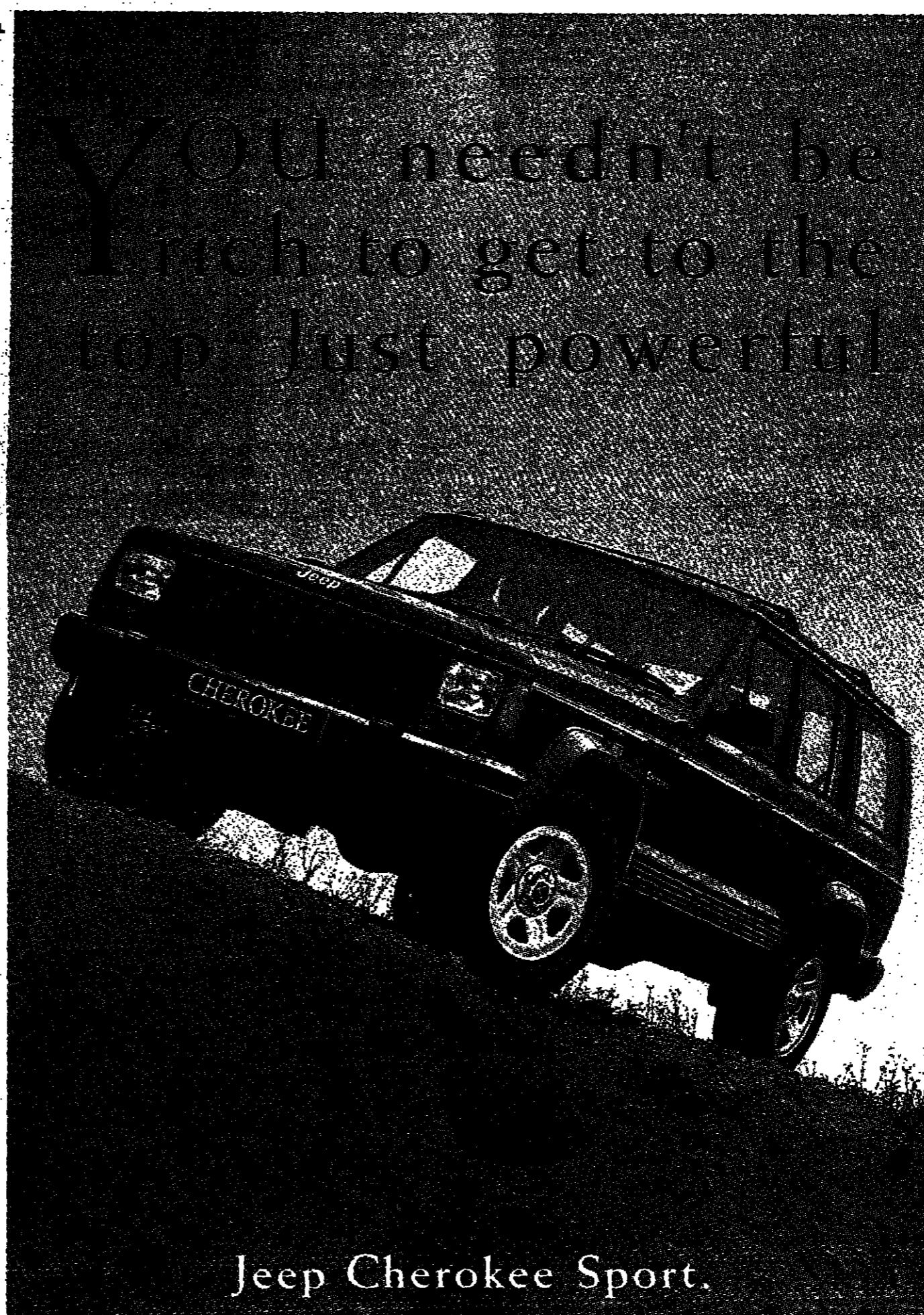
Mrs Bottomley also denied that she called in a memo for his role in the affair to be "flagged up". During 2½ hours in the witness box, she told the court she had not exercised any influence on what should go into a report

on the incident, or had anything to do with the decision to censure him.

A memo from her private secretary responding to the report asked "what about the consultant refusing to appear?", but that simply reflected her concern about publicly mentioning Mr Percy's role unless it had been substantiated or clarified.

Mr Percy, 55, from Bickley, southeast London, claims the Daily Mirror suggested he was guilty of gross dereliction of duty, bore some responsibility for the death of Malcolm Murray, 45, and should be suspended. Mr Murray died at Leeds General Infirmary last March after being flown from Queen Mary's when a junior doctor could find no neurosurgical intensive care bed for him in the South East.

The newspaper, which denies libel, says its story was an accurate account of a report of the South Thames regional health authority, which censured Mr Percy. The case continues on Monday.



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'It will be a tragedy if this great design is marred by infill or tinkering of any kind'



The acclaimed Truro courts, opened eight years ago. The building's original architects say an extension will make the most admired feature dark and dingy

Award-winning architects attack changes in court

BY MARCUS BINNEY AND STEPHEN FARRELL

THE Lord Chancellor's Department has outraged the British architectural establishment by altering one award-winning court building and stripping another of elaborate Victorian features.

The alterations in Truro Crown Courts, opened eight years ago and awarded a succession of prizes, are being made without reference to the original architects and will, they claim, ruin the building's most admired feature.

In London the stripping of the ornate interior and central oak staircase from the former Knightsbridge Crown Court, built in 1894 as the Hans Crescent Hotel, has left the building an empty shell.

The architects of the Truro Courts, Evans and Shalev, won awards for their work from the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Civic Trust, the Royal Fine Art Commission, the Institute of Structural Engineers and the Concrete Society. Now a first-floor extension is being thrust into the high space linking two rotundas, which bring light to the main concourse.

Eldred Evans, one of the partners, said: "It literally ruins the building's interior. We have happily done modifications at Truro before, but this time they have not consulted us. The changes make the centre of the courts dark and dingy." David Shalev added: "It is like putting a mezzanine in a cathedral."

The Lord Chancellor's De-

partment says the alterations are necessary because the workload of the courts has increased. The first-floor extension will provide judges' chambers to deal with small claims and family cases.

Lord St John of Fawsley, chairman of the Royal Fine Art Commission, said yesterday: "The Truro courts have raised the standard of court architecture throughout the country. It will be a tragedy if this great design is marred by infill or tinkering of any kind."

Owen Lader, president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, said: "The Truro court is a beacon of quality among buildings that are

more often the object of ridicule than admiration."

Paul Monaghan, architect to the Lord Chancellor's Department, said: "These are minor works with a value of £100,000. Our agents, Torby Project Management, are building surveyors, not architects, but in my view their approach and detailing is particularly sensitive."

The former Knightsbridge Crown Court was bought by Harrods for £25 million in December, after the interior had been removed. Mohamed Al Fayed, the store's chairman, accused the civil servants responsible of philistinism. "It is nothing less than a

scandal that the splendid joinery of this handsome interior can be destroyed without any possible sanction," he said.

Richard Holder, senior architectural adviser to the Victorian Society, said last night: "The only reason for taking out the roof beams would be to convert a room into two floors, but to take them out and just leave it like that is tragic."

Emma Phillips, Secretary of Save Britain's Heritage, said the destruction was unnecessary and no thought had been given to preservation. "This building was obviously a very elaborate example of sumptuous late Victorian craftsmanship."

Schoolboy detained for fatal stabbing

Mark McNeil, 15, who stabbed another boy to death in a "final showdown", was ordered to be detained for six years by the Old Bailey. McNeil, of Harrow, north London, could have avoided a fight with Mark Osborne, 16, last August but could not resist a challenge when other boys called him "chicken". He was cleared of murder but found guilty of manslaughter.

£96,000 award
Nadine Challinor, 31, whose career with Greater Manchester Police was destroyed when a car thief ran her down, was awarded £96,500 damages in the High Court in Manchester. She suffered back, arm and neck injuries in the incident.

Appeal fails

The Court of Appeal upheld the conviction of two brothers for the murder of their sister and her lover. Abdul Haq, 31, and Mohammed Saleem, 31, of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, were jailed for life in 1991. The victims' bodies have never been found.

Bathtime death

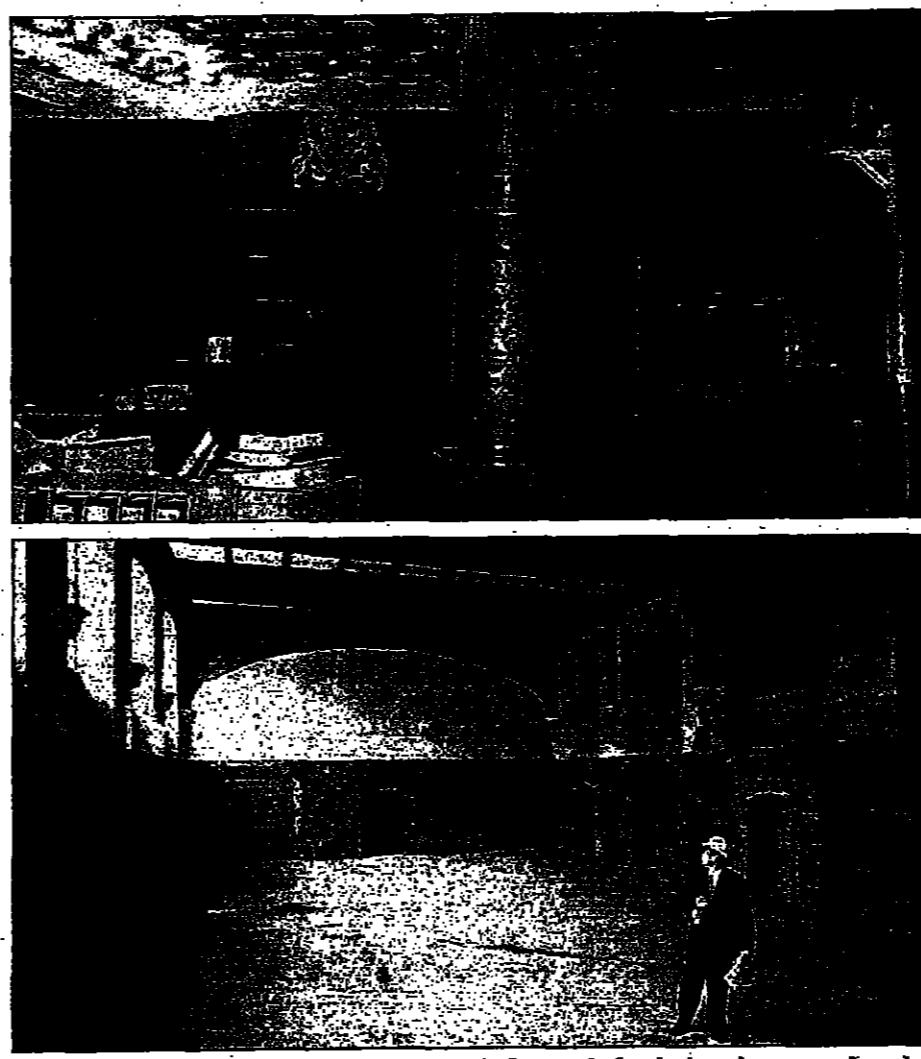
Akeem Mahmood, aged 18 months, died from burns after jumping into a scalding bath while his mother's back was turned. The coroner at Aberavon, Gwent, absolved his mother Laila, 21, of Newport, Gwent, of any blame for the accident.

Rare eagle stolen

One of only eight Bonelli's hunting eagles in Britain has been stolen. Andrew White, 25, a falconer from Bulwell, Nottingham, is offering a reward for the return of Bonnie, 16, which is worth £5,000. The bird was taken from an aviary at his house.

On safe lines

One passenger arriving at Potters Bar railway station, Hertfordshire, can call on security guards to see them safely to their car or taxi in a scheme sponsored by an Alhambra Life Insurance and launched by John Watts, the Transport Minister.



The former Knightsbridge Crown Court before and after its interior was stripped out, with the loss of ornate Victorian beams, paneling, and central oak staircase

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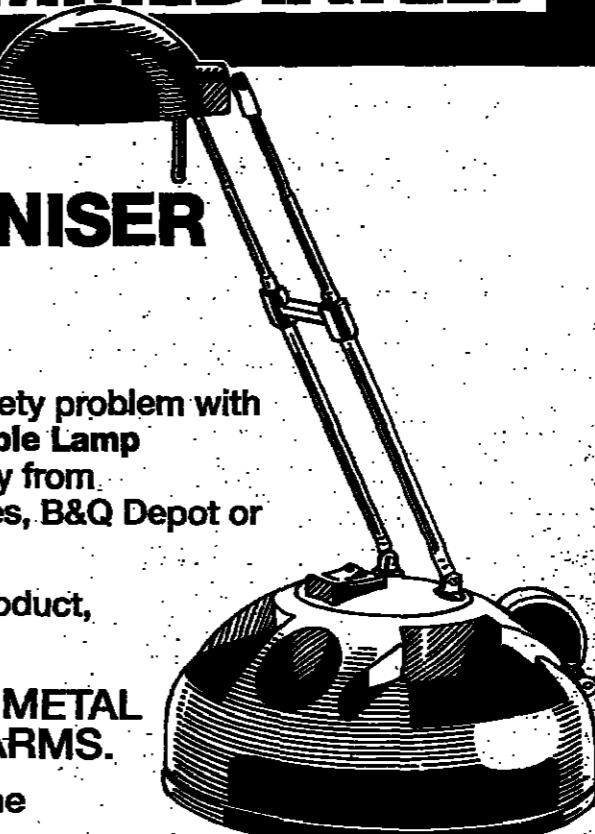
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THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

Schoolboy
detained
for fatal
stabbing

South West faces more standpipes Drought region's precious water washed out to sea

BY NICK NUTTALL AND ALASDAIR MURRAY

SOUTH WEST WATER has lost hundreds of millions of gallons of water from a reservoir serving an area still affected by drought.

The error by a company widely criticised for its service leaves customers in Devon and Cornwall facing a summer of even tougher restrictions despite paying the highest average charge at £509 a year, in the country.

South West Water, many of whose 1.5 million customers have endured supply restrictions for months, inadvertently sent about 1,000 million gallons (or 5,000 megalitres) from the Roadford Reservoir swelling down the Tamar and out to sea. The loss was equivalent to about 50 days' supply to Plymouth and south Devon.

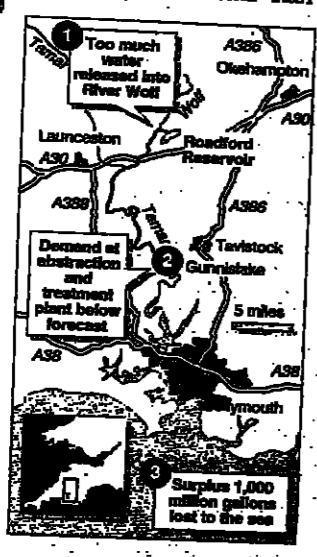
Even by the dismal stan-

dards of the water industry, South West Water has been exceptionally accident prone. The company has been regularly criticised for its poor water quality and for supply shortages that affected half of its 1.6 million customers last summer. In August 100,000 customers in Devon were forced to boil their water after a stomach bug outbreak.

The public outcry eventually proved too much for the company's board, and South West recently announced a clean sweep of its senior management. Bill Fraser, the managing director, whose recent pay increase from £157,000 to £227,000 a year was heavily criticised by shareholders, is retiring at the end of this month. He holds options worth about £120,000. Keith Court, the executive chairman, who was paid £164,000 last year and holds options worth about £100,000, will step down in April.

The National Rivers Authority uncovered the Roadford Reservoir loss, which occurred during a series of releases between May and October last year, during an inquiry into the level of supplies. It says the waste has heightened the threat of environmental damage and misery to customers.

The authority's report highlights the "seriousness of the potential summer situation for the Roadford 'supply zone'" and for two of the company's other strategic reservoirs, Colliford and Roadford, has 10,488 megalitres of water left.



Yorkshire puts up charges by 5.6%

YORKSHIRE WATER, whose reaction to the drought has been widely criticised, came under attack again yesterday after it announced it was raising bills by almost twice the rate of inflation. (Nick Nuttall writes.)

The company, which is still operating drought restrictions in and around Bradford and has had to take water to some homes by tanker, said it was raising charges by 5.6 per cent. It pointed out that the rise was in line with limits set by the Office of Water Services last April. The limit for five years was set at inflation plus 2.5 per cent. With inflation at 3.1 per cent, the increase is the maximum allowed. The company denied that the price rise

was to cover drought-related expenses.

This decision dismayed business people and consumer groups. David Wilkinson, head of the Bradford Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said yesterday: "We have had a disastrous summer in which everyone has been urged to reduce consumption and yet there are still restrictions. To impose a price hike roughly twice the rate of inflation is not only going to impose a heavy financial cost on businesses but will cause their attitude to Yorkshire Water to harden."

Penny Ward, of the pressure group Water Watch, said the rise was "an absolute disgrace", given that the service had been reduced.

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Eric Simms inspects his handiwork as traffic thunders along the A1 behind him

Naturalist verges on the A1 for inspiration

A RETIRED television producer has won a conservation award for turning the verges of a busy dual carriageway into a nature reserve.

Eric Simms, 74, noticed the unusual flora and fauna alongside the A1 in Lincolnshire when he drove past while producing a nature series for the BBC in 1979. He stopped to have a look and started a 17-year love affair with the roadside.

The South Witham Nature Reserve comprises two kilometres of verges and banks alongside the A1, a road underneath it and a slip-road off to the village.

When Mr Simms retired he moved to South Witham to devote more time to the reserve. His award for environmental achievement comes from the Lincolnshire Trust for Nature Conservancy.

Mr Simms believes the busy road helps the flowers. "The wind from the lorries passing at high speed blows the seeds around and the flowers are able to spread rapidly," he said. "It's remarkable really that the fumes don't do any harm."

THE SUNDAY TIMES

WHO DARES ... DIES?

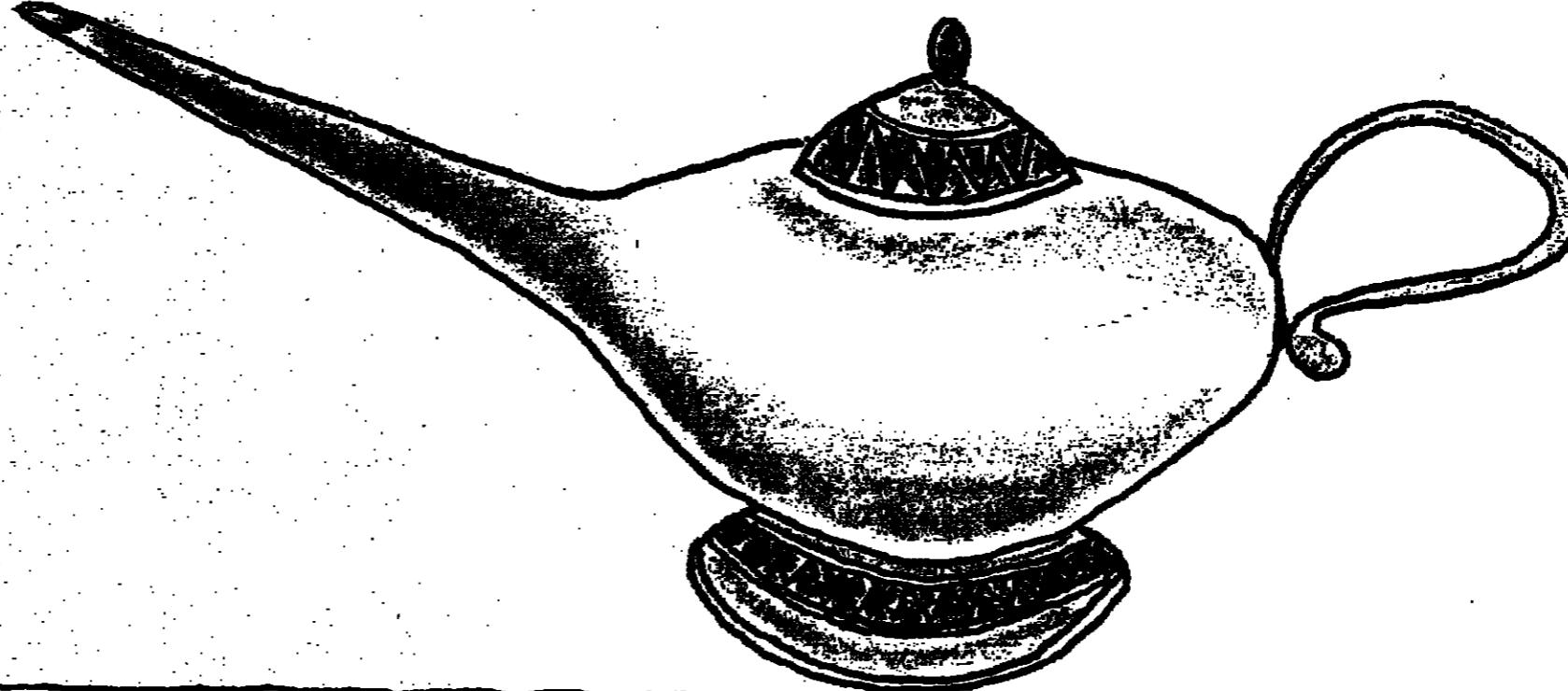
• Jakey came straight to the point: he believed the mission was ill-conceived and deeply flawed. In his view Operation Mikado amounted to the



needless and deliberate sacrifice of B squadron, 22 SAS; this being the case, he formally requested permission to withdraw... ■

The day the SAS were ordered to undertake a suicidal mission in the Falklands War — News Review, The Sunday Times tomorrow

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Labour and Liberal Democrats call for Waldegrave and Lyell to resign

Government accused of hiding Scott criticisms

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR and the Liberal Democrats joined forces yesterday to demand that William Waldegrave and Sir Nicholas Lyell resign in the wake of the Scott report.

Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, and Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman, attempting to mobilise support from potential Tory rebels as well as the public, held a joint press conference at which they accused the Government of lying about the Scott report to hide its more damaging findings.

In a sign that Labour and the Liberal Democrats might co-operate more closely as the general election approaches, the two MPs also called for reforms to improve parliamentary accountability, including a Freedom of Information Act.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, made clear that the Government had little intention of acting on many central criticisms in Sir Richard Scott's report. One rec-

ommendation was that public interest immunity certificates not be used in criminal cases. At his press conference yesterday, Mr Lang said other judges disagreed with Sir Richard on this. The certificates had been used before and would continue to be used.

Mr Lang disagreed with Sir Richard's assertion that guidelines on arms sales to Iraq had been changed. Denying that government was cloaked in secrecy, he said: "Our objective is to be as open as possible."

But Mr Cook was determined not to let Sir Richard's criticisms be spirited away by the Tory public relations machine or Mr Lang. Labour is furious that when the Scott report was published, on Thursday, the press and Tory MPs were given "selective and misleading" papers on it containing only the Tories' defence. Ann Taylor, shadow Leader of the House, is writing to all Tory MPs with Labour documents on the report to balance the crib-sheets supplied by the Government.

Mr Cook said the two parties were pursuing a combined attack, on parliamentary grounds, rather than taking a partisan approach. The issues went to the heart of the constitution. The report had provoked a "parliamentary crisis" that could be cleared only by ministerial resignations.

Mr Cook said Mr Waldegrave had misled MPs 30 to

40 times and had been criticised between 20 and 30 times by Sir Richard. "If he does not resign, no minister of this Government will be believed again," Mr Cook said.

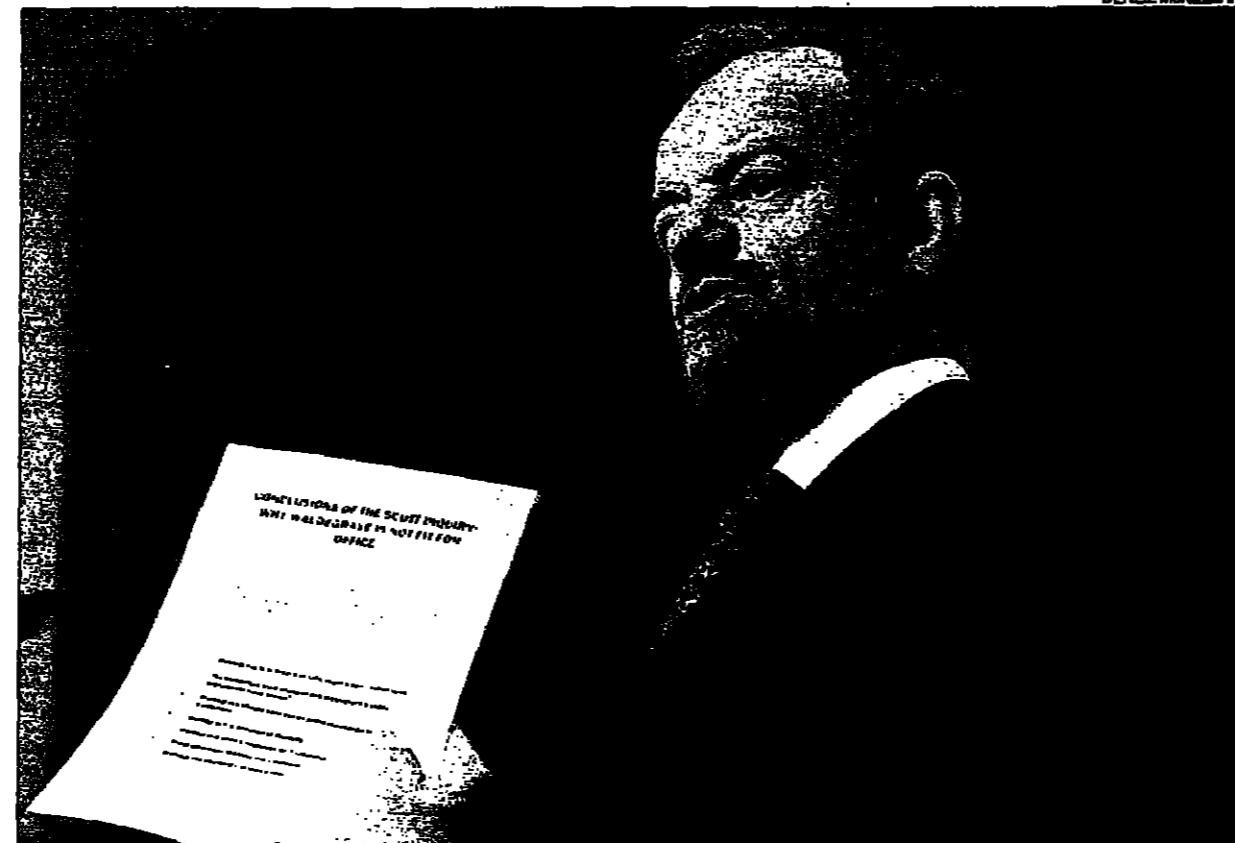
Mr Campbell said Mr Waldegrave was one of the ministers responsible for a decision that had led to the principle of ministerial accountability being "systematically ignored." He added: "It is not possible to think of any other

sphere in which an individual could be so criticised and still retain his job."

Mr Cook said Sir Nicholas could not now remain in office. The report found that the Attorney-General's advice to ministers that they had to sign public interest immunity certificates "had no legal foundation." He was found to be "personally" at fault over failing to ensure that the Matrix Churchill trial judge was informed of Michael Heseltine's reluctance to sign a certificate.

Mr Cook also criticised the decision of ministers that the debate, on February 26, would be on an adjournment motion, so that Opposition parties would be unable to table an amendment, such as one calling for resignations.

Vernon Bogdanor, page 22
Leading article and
Letters, page 23



Robin Cook at the press conference he held with Menzies Campbell, his Liberal Democrat counterpart

Instant reaction cannot dispel every shadow

THE Government has no shortage of chutzpah. John Major led a chorus of gleeful senior ministers yesterday claiming victory, or any rate escape, in the Scott affair. They may be right, thanks, paradoxically, to Sir Richard Scott himself. Before his report was published, several Tories argued that his inquiry had been unfair to witnesses. In the event, Sir Richard was painfully fair and balanced, about motives if not actions, so there is something in the report for everyone.

Ministers could justify their "not guilty" claims by putting the charges against them in the most extreme terms, and then saying they had, in Mr Major's words, been "comprehensively" dismissed by Scott. The Tories have argued that the inquiry was "about whether innocent men were going to be sent to jail by conspiracy" and whether Saddam Hussein was being armed by the British Government.

Expressed in these oversimplified terms, admittedly sometimes used by Labour spokesmen, the report clears ministers. And, having set the debate in these false terms, the Government then brushes aside the rest of the report. Shortcomings and mistakes are admitted and will be considered very carefully by the Government, but the implication is that they are largely technical and boring, and of no real interest to anyone. Differences about the use of immunity certificates are dismissed as merely an argument between lawyers.

As a propaganda exercise, that has so far been successful,

not least because the Government had the initiative and has been able to mount a defence. But it fails to answer questions posed by the report. From the start, the inquiry has concerned ministerial accountability to Parliament and the conduct of the Matrix Churchill trial. The report contains many highly critical passages about both, as Robin Cook and Menzies Campbell pointed out yesterday. There are numerous sections casting doubt on the competence, if not the good faith, of ministers and civil servants. The Labour and Liberal Democrat case is that ministerial responsibility does not just rest on good intentions but also relates to conduct in office.

Even if the more lurid and extreme charges are dismissed, there are still substantial points to be answered, not only on the details of the cases but also on ministers' relations with Parliament. The new Commons Public Service Committee could make a start by summoning the two key ministers and Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet Secretary, before the full debate on the report on Monday week.

Mr Cook and Mr Campbell have landed several blows, but none so far is likely to achieve a knockout. Their problem is that public, or rather press, attention to the Scott affair is likely to be limited, and the political agenda could soon move on.

PETER RIDDELL

MPs fail to resist TV over-exposure

By ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

POLITICIANS will prove soon that they are prepared to do almost anything to appear on television, including being interviewed on the lavatory.

A new Channel 4 comedy show next Friday has asked backbenchers to perform outlandish stunts. Many have complied, but there are some limits beyond which even media-months fear to go.

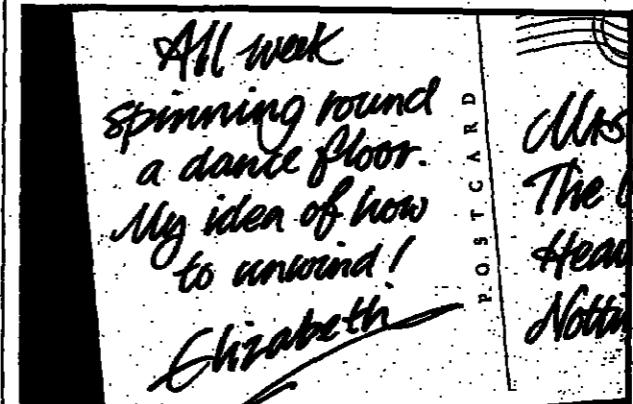
Jerry Hayes, who has already dressed up as a French maid to prove his worthiness as Tory MP for Harlow, has agreed to wear a bear costume, but he drew the line at appearing as an eff penis, saying: "I don't mind putting a costume on, but that would be a perfect tabloid picture."

Two other Tory MPs, David Martin and David Amess, submit to grueling tests for the *Mark Thomas Comedy*

Product. They have their backsides photographed by a fluffy bear and play noughts and crosses and draw their constituents on a woman's stomach. They also pretend to be ancient rock stars strumming guitars and crooning.

Opposition MPs are even less camera-shy. George Galloway, Labour MP for Hillhead, is interviewed sitting on the lavatory at his home. But although Mr Galloway proves that he thinks he is young at heart, he cannot answer basic questions about the bands Take That and Pulp.

The Liberal Democrat Simon Hughes turns his living-room into a disco complete with dry ice and displays his dancing skills. He then shows the film crew his underwear drawer and offers a pair of boxer shorts for charity.



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Preachers must give meaning to world'

BY RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

PREACHERS most rediscover the Bible's "good promise" to give meaning to a spiritually lost world, a theologian says. "The 20th-century problem is neither death nor guilt, but meaninglessness," David Buttrick, a professor of homiletics, writes in a paper published by the College of Preachers.

Professor Buttrick, whose paper coincides with the college's launch of the second Preacher of the Year award sponsored by The Times, predicts that preaching will become more evangelical and less biblical. "People these days wonder the world without a clue. They live in a series of short-term purposes — 'I will go to school', 'I will buy a car' — but people have no overall theological vision by which to live."

Professor Buttrick says: "We live after Freud, and what grandmother attributed to God is now 'anxiety hysteria'. In the 20th century, the Church handed over the province of nature to the scientist and the province of the heart to psychiatry." Preachers turned to history and the Bible instead. "We compressed Christian faith into not much more than 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so'. Our sermons tend to speak of a once-upon-a-time past-tense God," Professor Buttrick, from Vanderbilt University, Tennessee, says.

At Your Service,
Weekend, page 3

Shamed don must pay back £160,000 for stolen books

BY TIM JONES

A DON jailed for two years for stealing rare books from college libraries to settle mortgage debts was ordered to pay £160,000 in compensation yesterday. Most of the money is expected to be raised from the sale of his house.

Dr Simon Heighes, a presenter of Radio 3's *Composer of the Week* programme, was trusted visitor at university libraries holding some of Britain's rarest books. He lectured at The Queen's College, Oxford, is an authority on baroque music and was regarded as a respectable academic and musical scholar.

However, he abused his position to loot libraries of 78 antique treasures and sold some of them for a total of £40,000. The most valuable work was a 1687 first edition of Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica*, alone worth £67,500. It had been kept in Christ Church library for more than 300 years. Heighes sold the book for £65,500.

Yesterday, as the compensation orders were made at Northampton Crown Court, there was confusion over the location of the book. The court was told that it was back with an Oxford bookshop, which had bought it in good faith from him. But a spokesman for Blackwell's bookshop said it was not with them and was with the person they had sold it to or another buyer.

Heighes, of Oxford, was sentenced to two years' jail in December after admitting six counts of theft, five of obtaining property by deception and one of attempted deception. Another 130 offences were taken into consideration.



Heighes: abused trust of university libraries

compensation of £80,245 to Blackwell's; £52,940 to Sotheby's; £20,995 to Christ Church, £5,200 to Trinity Music College and £1,350 to The Queen's College.

Nigel Daly, for the prosecution, said Heighes had £198,687 available from the sale of his house and an inheritance from his grandfather.

He said: "If he pays this figure of compensation, he will not have made a profit from his offending. In fact he will have lost."

In addition to the *Principia*, other missing works included

an £8,000 volume of Newton's *Opticks* (1704), believed now to be somewhere in Germany, a £3,200 volume by the 17th-century composer Frescobaldi, last traced to a dealer in Rome, and a £19,000 astrological text by Edmond Halley, *Catalogue Stellarum Australium* (1679), last traced to a dealer in London.

After the don's arrest in May last year, detectives and a team of antiquarian book experts followed a trail from Britain to America, Germany and Italy to try to trace the works. They found all but "minor" books, and have appealed to dealers and collectors to return them.

After the thefts, Christ Church reviewed security measures and the Bodleian Library is considering introducing electronic book tagging to prevent similar offences.

Making the order for compensation, Judge Allen said he was pleased to hear the Newton book had been recovered. He said: "Nothing else approached that in individual value or rarity."

But Blackwell's were insistent the book was not with them. A spokesman said: "I understand it has been traced, but I do not know where it is."

Credo

Escape a mess of pottage on wobbly ladder of faith

Barry Overend

stone to show that at that place Heaven and Earth were joined.

It is the precise nature of that link which strikes me as being particularly significant. Heaven and Earth were joined by nothing more substantial than a ladder. I was therefore dismayed to discover that in one children's version of the Bible, Jacob's ladder had become a "stairway". Something vital had been lost from the story. The insecurity of a ladder had been abandoned for the safety of a flight of steps.

A ladder is a basic utilitarian piece of equipment. You climb it at your peril, in full knowledge of the precariousness of your situation. Hence the phrase "easy as falling off a ladder". Jacob's ladder is symbolic of the kind of risk that the Bible envisages as being unavoidable in a living relationship with God. Many biblical character could testify to the risky nature of their faith in God.

Forced to run it, Jacob dossed down at the roadside. There he dreamt of a ladder stretching from Earth to Heaven. The angels of God were going up and down. He took it as a sign that the spot where he was lying was not such a God-forsaken place. "Truly the Lord is in this place and I never knew it!" Jacob marked the site with a holy

stone to show that at that place Heaven and Earth were joined.

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They were often called to do dangerous and difficult things for which they felt

totally inadequate. But when they expressed their reluctance to accept the challenge, they were told not to argue, just to obey. In their heart they knew that God was urging them to take the reckless step of getting on with it. They had no idea what would be the outcome. They could take it in faith only one step at a time. But then, how else can you climb a ladder?

Jacob seems to have interpreted his dream as good news. It imparted the comforting truth that God is nearer to us than we sometimes think.

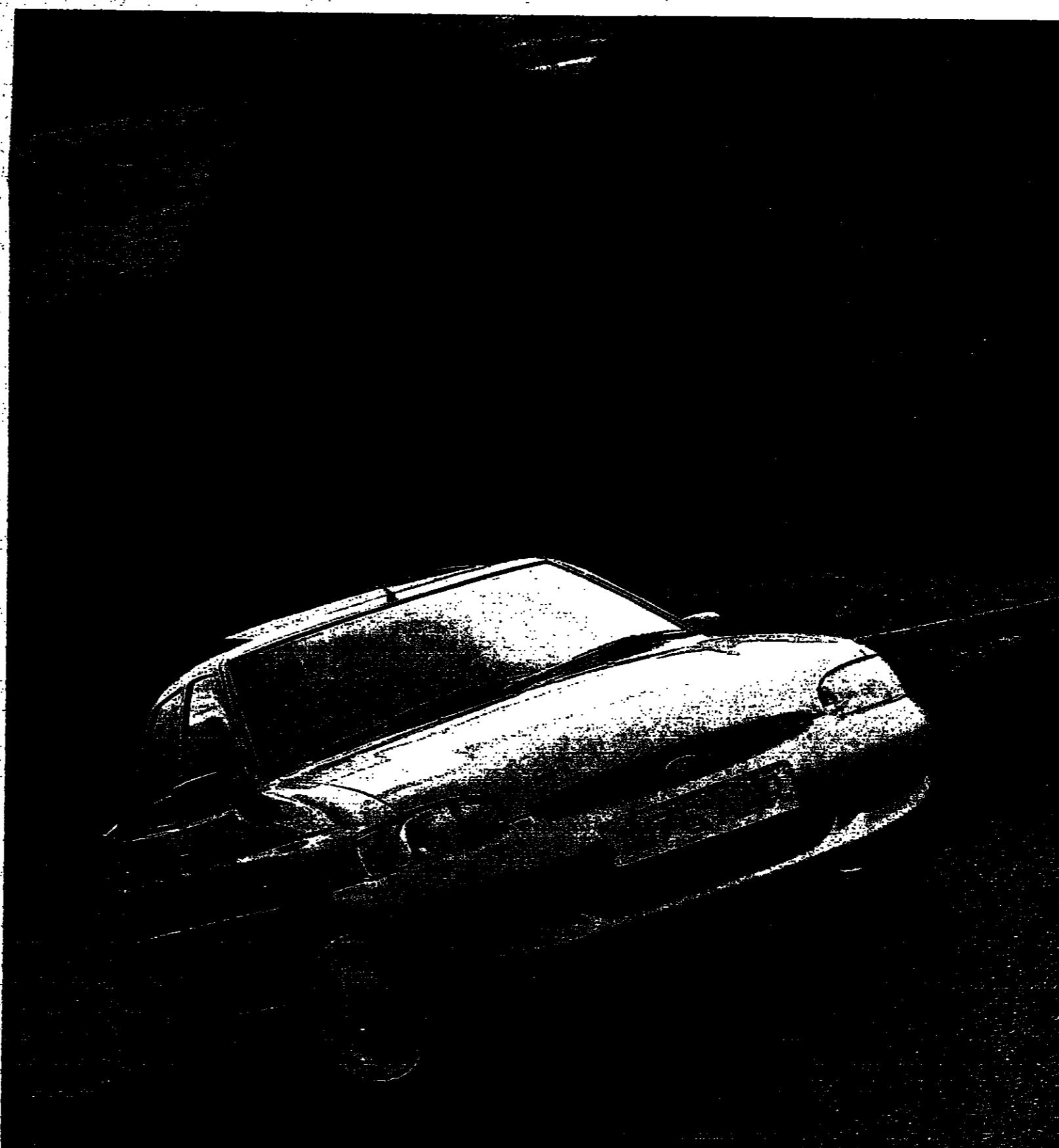
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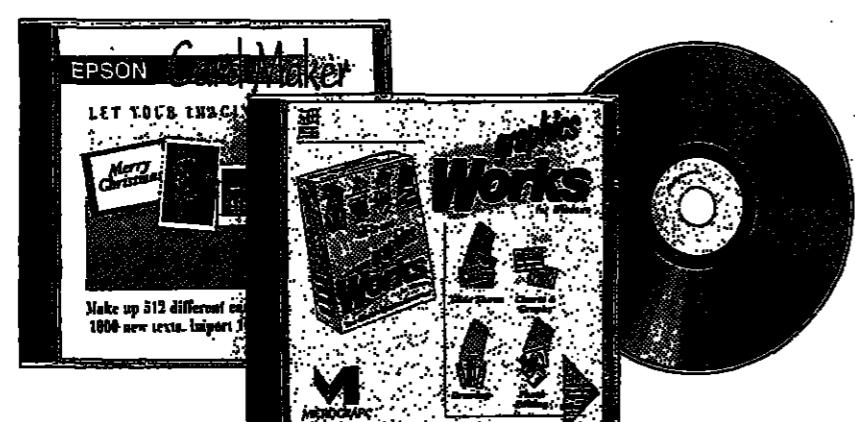
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Socialists join poll rivals in threat to Eta

By EDWARD OWEN
IN MADRID AND
OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SPAIN'S ruling Socialists, facing defeat in the general election on March 3, announced yesterday that the political wing of the Basque Eta guerrilla group might be declared illegal.

The Government, which is trailing the conservative Popular Party in the polls, had announced hours earlier that it was asking prosecutors to file charges against leaders of the Herri Batasuna group for supporting terrorism.

"I think there are legal grounds to act on the basis of collaboration with terrorism," Felipe González, the Prime Minister, told state television.

The Socialist initiative marked the launch of campaigning and came on the heels of proposals by the Popular Party (PP), led by José María Aznar, to crack down on Basque separatists who advocate violence. The PP is predicted to achieve its first election victory.

"Eta and its supporters have reason to be worried, because we are going to finish with them," Señor Aznar said as he opened his campaign in the southern port of Cádiz yesterday. He said the PP would ensure that all Eta prisoners complete their full prison terms.

The announcements followed the murder by Eta on Wednesday of Francisco Tomás y Valiente, a widely respected law professor who served for six years as head of Spain's constitutional court.

The killing, the second in less than two weeks, produced widespread public anger. Thousands of students and citizens paused in silent protest on Thursday as the murdered professor was buried, with Señor González and Cabinet ministers in attendance.



José María Aznar, the Spanish conservative leader, who is strongly favoured to win next month's election

Spain's leader in waiting spells out EMU doubts

THE move to monetary union could divide Europe if it is not launched with a consensus of Britain and the four other big EU members, says José María Aznar, the centre-right politician who is the strong favourite to become Spain's Prime Minister next month.

Señor Aznar made clear, in an interview with *The Times*, that under his leadership Spain would assert its interests forcefully within the EU and that he would keep an open mind on Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). His stance marks a distinct shift from the Euro-enthusiasm of Felipe González, the Socialist Prime Minister, who took Spain into the EU in 1986.

Señor Aznar's Partido Popular (PP) has raised its lead to ten points over the Socialists in opinion polls ahead of the March 3 election. Although Señor González, weary of scandal in his administration, could scrape back, the big question is whether Señor Aznar will win an outright majority or be forced to seek accommodation with the prickly Catalan and Basque nationalist parties.

With victory in reach, the former tax inspector with a bland style that draws comparisons with John Major is doing nothing to upset voters who have qualms about the return of the Right two decades after the death of Franco.

Although he professes himself a free-marketeer, his plans to tackle Spain's disastrous 23 per cent level of unemployment do not include cutting the welfare system set up by the Socialists or dismantling the rigid labour laws. Señor Aznar, 42, insists he is the "party of the centre". His team, he says, consists of both Christian Democrats and "neo-liberal" like himself. The far Right, used by the Socialists as a bogey, is ancient history, he says. "Spain has overcome its past... When the previous regime ended, we were all students."

According to the PP's supporters, Spain's "second transition", as they call the anticipated change of government, will mark a coming of age in which it can shed the

plumage of fledgling democracy. The outline of this more self-confident Spain emerges from conversation with Señor Aznar at the PP's offices, a place buzzing with young party workers who could have come from the Clinton campaign of 1992.

While he was speaking, a gunman from Eta, the Basque guerrilla group, murdered an eminent jurist at Madrid's main university. A PP government would be expected to crack down harder on Eta, which last year came close to killing Señor Aznar in a bomb attack. His cool behaviour after the explosion won him widespread admiration.

While professing himself committed to the objective of EMU, Señor Aznar depicts Spain as one of the big powers and breaches the taboo which bars continental leaders from uttering doubt over the fate of monetary union.

"It seems absolutely absurd that something as important as monetary union should not be debated among all the countries. We are committed to the European Union... but I believe the nations that can make the most transcendental decisions are four or five essential historic nations: France, Germany, Britain, Spain and Italy... No great process in Europe can get on the road without the basic consensus or common accord of these countries."

Señor Aznar would not be drawn on the merits of a delay, something supported by many in Spain, since the country is given little chance of meeting the Maastricht convergence criteria. An Aznar government would keep up the effort to meet the test, but he says he would leave a decision later.

This is guaranteed to raise eyebrows in Brussels because the Maastricht treaty allows only Britain to decide for itself whether to join EMU. Señor

Aznar had high praise for Miguel Boyer, the former Socialist Finance Minister and one of the architects of monetary union, who has just made waves with an outburst against EMU and thrown in his lot with the PP.

The party leader is also worried about the plan to bring in new EU members from Eastern Europe. Under present arrangements, he says, Spain would carry the burden of bailing out the former Communist countries. An Aznar government would also side with Britain in its refusal to give up the veto in the EU's foreign and defence policies.

On Gibraltar, which has long bedevilled ties between London and Madrid, Señor Aznar says he does not exclude raising the pressure on the

frontier. Like previous governments, he will not allow the Gibraltarians to take part in Anglo-Spanish negotiations. "There are good relations but no trust" between Spain and Britain over the issue, he said.

Britain remains something of a model when it comes to the PP's plans for trimming waste and mismanagement in the bureaucracy and for privatisation. He is banking, he says, on a German-style pact involving unions, employers and the government. Only in the area of fraud and corruption will he be ferocious.

He flinches at any comparison with the election promises of Jacques Chirac in France last year. "I am the opposite. I feel much more in tune with what has come about in Germany," he says.

He compares himself with Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, in another department — the lack of a strong public personality, which is often held to be his biggest handicap. Spain has had enough of charisma, he says.

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Two young Popular Party supporters joining the launch of Señor Aznar's campaign yesterday



Ill omens plague Year of the Rat

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

THE natural and man-made disasters rocking China as it enters the Year of the Rat, which begins on Monday, are seen by many Chinese as auguries that their Government has lost its legitimacy.

Even Western-educated Hong Kong intellectuals confess themselves shaken by recent dark happenings in a season when people give presents of flowering plants and fruit symbolising hope, life and the coming of spring.

In traditional theory, when the empire was ruled badly, it was said to have lost the Mandate of Heaven and the people would rebel. The sign of this loss was a series of strange disasters.

The Chinese Government, never eager to report bad news, at this season becomes especially careful about what it reveals. Only yesterday it was announced in *Wen Wei Po*, a Peking-backed Hong Kong newspaper, that 23 people died on February 9 when a ferry sank in a gale off the southeast coast.

The explosion of the Long March rocket and its satellite this week was not only a financial disaster for China, which had been counting on cheap satellite

launches to attract foreign customers, but a human one as well, resulting in somewhere between a handful of deaths and many more — according to foreigners near the scene — as flaming debris and poisonous gas spread over an agricultural region in the south-west of the country.

The television-watching public was shielded from a view of the flaming rocket hurtling into the ground, and heard only control room technicians gasping: "It's finished." Yesterday's Chinese newspapers carried only minimal stories. There was a similar lack of coverage in January 1995 when another Long March rocket disintegrated on lift-off.

All satellite launches were suspended after the latest accident, the China Aerospace Corporation said yesterday. "There were some victims, including among the space centre personnel," it said. A local official said there were four deaths and that some people had been hurt by fumes.

Earlier this month an earthquake measuring seven on the Richter scale devastated a vast area near the Tibetan border, killing more than 300 people and



Two gold rats, one modelled on the Statue of Liberty, go on sale at a Hong Kong jewellers for about £520 each to mark the Year of the Rat

China is warned Japan may rearm if Taiwan raided

FROM PEGREINE HODSON IN TOKYO

JAPAN will rearm if China attacks Taiwan, according to a former senior American defence official.

Charles Freeman, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, said yesterday he had told Chinese officials that, if the Chinese attacked Taiwan, Japan would rearm, whether the Americans intervened or not and whatever the outcome of the fighting.

"If we decide not to intervene, there will be many people in Japan who see this as a default on American responsibility to manage the strategic perimeter of Japan and there will be a lot of people and a lot of pressure demanding that Japan acquire the capability to do this by itself without the United States," he said.

"Conversely, if the US decides to intervene, then we have to use bases in Japan to do it. This means that the Japanese Government has to choose between good relations with China and its alliance with the US."

"I think any Japanese Government would choose the US, but I also think that no Japanese Government would

CARTOONISTS & WRITERS SYNDICATE



How the threat to Taiwan was seen by *Le Monde*

Bangladesh poll stirs new protests

Dhaka: The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won an expected easy victory yesterday after general elections. But boycotting opposition leaders dismissed the vote and threatened fresh action to paralyse the country.

Partial poll results showed that the BNP, of Begum Khalida Zia, the Prime Minister, had won 167 out of 300 parliamentary seats, with one seat going to an independent candidate.

As the country emerged from a three-day shutdown called to protest against the vote, opposition leaders threatened yet another strike in the poverty-stricken nation which has been repeatedly disrupted by stoppages since 1994.

Thursday's vote was accompanied by widespread violence. At least 16 people were killed and 500 wounded; poll officials were attacked, ballot papers stolen and voting centres set ablaze. (Reuters)

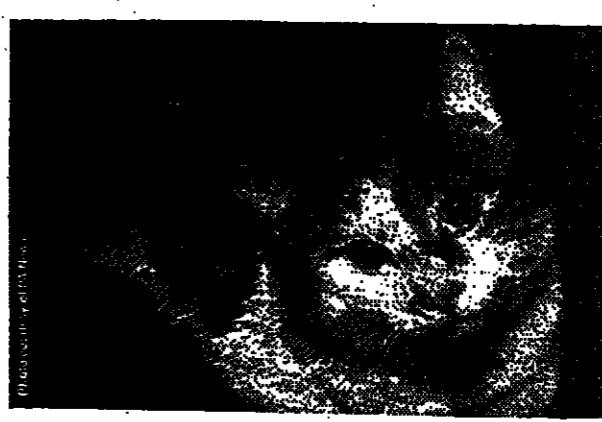
Mohajirs shot dead by police

Karachi: Eight activists of the ethnic Mohajir National Movement were shot dead and two others wounded in a gun battle, Pakistani police reported yesterday.

"They were terrorists and one of them, Hasan Akhter, was wanted in over 40 criminal cases," police said. The shootout began when police raided a house used as the movement's hideout in the western Orangi Town area.

Akhter's weeping mother said at the hospital where the bodies were taken that her son and his friends had been shot as they slept. "The policemen broke open the door and sprayed bullets on my sleeping children."

The Mohajirs have called a general strike for today in protest at the killing of four of its activists by police on Thursday. Police said they had died in a gunfight. The movement claimed that police arrested the four and then shot them in cold blood. (Reuters)



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Whitewater factor drags Republican wives into media gauntlet



Mrs Dole: accused of having enjoyed financial gains

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

THERE was a time when spouses of presidential candidates led a surrogate existence, appearing before tiny crowds in remote coffee shops, courting minor dignitaries and talking to small-town newspapers.

Tramping through the snows of New Hampshire this week that was a role Honey, the wife of Lamar Alexander, the former Tennessee Governor, has been eager to resuscitate. But as she left the safety of offices and church halls in the Granite State, Mrs Alexander soon ran into the inevitable barrage of questions about her business deal-

ings and how she compared herself to Hillary Clinton.

Mrs Clinton's early role as policy adviser to the Administration and her ties to the Whitewater scandal have made the "spouse" card a critical factor.

Scrutiny has focused on Elizabeth Dole, wife of Robert Dole, the Senate Majority Leader from Kansas, and Mrs Alexander, both of whom had successful careers before any declaration was made. Mrs Dole was a former Secretary of Labour and of Transportation in separate Cabinets, and is president of the American Red Cross.

She has been the subject of a less than flattering article in the New

Yorker which suggested that she had benefited financially from special treatment because of the political activities of her husband. The controversy centres on her personal investments, which were placed in a blind trust while she served in government. According to the magazine, Mrs Dole was given special treatment several times. On one occasion she was able to recoup an initial investment of \$250,000 (£162,000) and \$71,000 in interest from an insolvent company.

But for Mrs Alexander, director of a childcare business and former board member of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, this has been something of a baptism of fire. She invested \$5,000 in a prison management firm founded by an associate of her husband. After the company proposed to take over the Tennessee prison system, Mrs Alexander traded shares for insurance stock she later sold for \$142,000.

Sabina Forbes, a minister's daughter who stays at home and takes care of five children, has remained unscathed by such publicity despite a brief foray as the protagonist in advertisements for her husband, Steve Forbes, the multimillionaire publisher.

Shelley Buchanan, the silent and adoring wife of the firebrand commentator, has seen too much to wish for a profile. She spent three seasons as an assistant to Richard Nixon on the campaign trail, and when he became President in 1969 she settled into a job as receptionist in the White House.

"I did that for six years," she said. "If you wanted to see the President or any of his senior staff, you had to see me first."

Studied silence makes her the ideal foil to Pat Buchanan and his fiery message. It is also shrewd tactic by the Buchanan camp to protect her.

Mrs Alexander perhaps should take a lesson from the woman who witnessed Watergate, or she may find her image as a second Mrs Clinton remains.

Buchanan packs punches to pull level with Dole

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

THE unthinkable is becoming daily more likely. Pat Buchanan, the right-wing populist, could beat Robert Dole in next Tuesday's critical New Hampshire primary and throw the race for the Republican presidential nomination into disarray.

Mr Buchanan, a former amateur boxer, punched hardest and best effect in a high-stakes televised debate on Thursday night that became an ugly free-for-all, and yesterday's polls showed that the broadcaster had drawn level with Mr Dole, the ostensible front-runner.

Mr Buchanan has cornered the sizeable conservative vote while Lamar Alexander, the former Tennessee Governor, is now splitting Mr Dole's mainstream support. Polls say that his followers are more likely than Mr Dole's to turn out on the day. He alone brings real passion and conviction to the race, and his protectionist message clearly resonates at a time of widespread economic insecurity.

Mr Buchanan won the Louisiana caucuses and nearly defeated Mr Dole in Iowa last week. President Clinton's campaign officials are ecstatic at his New Hampshire surge. Republican elders are appalled at the idea of a nominee even more extreme than the disastrous Barry Goldwater in 1964, but the more the Establishment attacks Mr Buchanan,

the more it fuels his insurgency. Whatever the merits of his ideas, Mr Buchanan is a brilliant television performer, and used his professional training to full effect in Thursday's eight-man debate.

Standing next to Mr Dole, he excoriated the veteran Senate leader for airing advertisements labelling him an "extremist" — the curse word of the Establishment". He continued: "If I am an extremist, why are you pirating my ideas and parroting my rhetoric? Where did you get that idea for the cultural war for the soul of America? Where did you get this other idea about corporate greed? I don't think you can call me an extremist when you've become a pretty good echo of Pat Buchanan."

Mr Dole, who had hoped to remain aloof and presidential, turned to Mr Buchanan and remarked: "Bad day or something?" He mocked what he called "Pat's isolationist kick", and accused him of wanting to "build a fence round America". But Mr Buchanan pleaded "guilty" to wanting to protect American workers' jobs.

He damned the free trade agreements Mr Dole has shepherded through Congress, saying they shipped jobs abroad and depressed wages at home. He attacked Mr Dole's support for a \$50 billion (£32 billion) Mexican

Peter Stothard, Weekend

Rio police to guard carnival tourists

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI
IN RIO DE JANEIRO

MARIA LUZIA DA SILVA has been waiting all year for the next four days of Rio Carnival revelry.

She will strap on pink high heels, adorn her scantily clad body with glittering accessories, and dance to vibrant, tropical sambas. Senhora da Silva has saved for months from her meagre salary as a shop assistant to buy the £160 costume for the flamboyant procession choreographed by the Mangueira Samba School, one of 20 competing for a prize for best song and show.

"I will dance until I drop. This will be the biggest moment for me, it will be a feeling of sheer exhilaration," said the 20-year-old *passeia* (carnival procession dancer).

More than 100,000 people and hundreds of richly adorned mobile stages will cram the wide avenue in the Sambadrome, a stadium that has become the centre of the carnival. Each school, many run by Mafia-like families who also control an illegal gambling game played on Rio street corners, spends at least £1 million to put on its show.

A good seat can cost £100, and for most residents this is something only tourists can afford. Many leave the city for the four-day holiday and let the visitors take over. "Our carnival has become a display for tourists happy to pay the hefty prices. It is no longer the street party which it once was," Maria Augusta Rodrigues, a veteran choreographer, said.



Milton Cunha, the artistic director of the Beija-Flor samba school, with a giant baby, one of hundreds of figures featuring in the Rio carnival which starts today

To protect the show from crime, the city authorities have moved the party from the streets to the Sambadrome

Many residents argue, however, that the carnival has become flashier but is still the party of the year for all, where inhibitions are let loose and

people indulge in shameless hedonism. Carnival was an import from Portuguese colonists in the 18th century who put on yearly balls to mark a religious holiday, and then it was mixed with the traditions of freed African slaves.

Tennessee coma victim starts talking again after seven speechless years

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

A MAN came out of a seven-year coma in a flurry of words, proceeding to talk coherently almost non-stop for 18 hours, and then lapsed back into silence as a result of a bout of pneumonia.

Gary Dockery, 42, a Tennessee policeman, originally entered his vegetative condition after being shot in September 1988. He had lain in hospital, speechless, to the despair

of family and friends who agonised over whether efforts should be made to keep him alive.

Inexplicably, Mr Dockery this week regained his power of speech. His sister, Lisa, while sitting by his bed at a hospital in Chattanooga, noticed an unusually alert look in the eyes which for more than seven years had betrayed little sign of life. "I am your sister," she said, not for a moment expecting a reply. "Uh-huh," mumbled Mr Dockery. Lisa exclaimed: "You're talking!" To

which her brother replied brightly: "I am."

The next day he talked and talked, asking about the President (Ronald Reagan) and a long list of friends, giving their full names. He knew the colour of his vehicle, the names and colours of his horses, recognised at once his sons, Colt and Shane, now aged 12 and 19, and pooh-poohed suggestions that he rest. The one thing he could not recall was his shooting, for which a man is serving a 37-year sentence.

Lisa Dockery summoned other members of the family, to whom Mr Dockery spoke as if not a day had passed. When Lisa telephoned her older brother, Dennis, she told him: "There's someone here who wants to talk to you." She then handed the phone to Gary who said: "Hey, buddy."

Dennis Dockery said afterwards: "I couldn't believe it. I started screaming my brother's name and told him I loved him." Such expressions of affection come uneasily to

Tennessee menfolk, and Gary said teasingly: "Me? You love me?"

His recovery then started to falter, owing to a bout of pneumonia which had begun before he recovered his speech. Yesterday he underwent a life-saving operation that drained infectious fluid from his lungs. He opened his eyes later and responded to questions by squeezing the hands of relatives at his bedside.

David Rankine, a neurologist treating Mr Dockery, said it was likely that his recovery would be

permanent. However, doctors are baffled by the way he burst back into conversation and say that he may not have been in a full coma. They said it was not possible to draw conclusions about other coma victims.

Dr Rankine said that when Mr Dockery started to speak it was as if someone had simply reinserted an electric plug which powered his consciousness. Before he came round, Mr Dockery was receiving antibiotics.

Tax burden
Paris A retired businessman paid 3.7 million francs (about £500,000) in fines and back tax in more than 22 times of one franc coin, delivered to a tax office in 900 bags by four rented armoured vans. (APF)

Farrakhan calls on US to halt 'mass murder of Iraqis'

By TOM RHODES

LOUIS FARRAKHAN, the controversial black activist, has made peace with another of his country's sworn enemies and accused America of inciting the "mass murder" of the Iraqi people.

In Baghdad this week to meet President Saddam Hussein, Mr Farrakhan denounced the United Nations sanctions imposed against Iraq after the Gulf War and attacked the insistence of Washington on maintaining the embargo. "Keeping them in place is a very wicked policy that must be stopped immediately," the Nation of Islam leader said after touring the Amriya shelter in which hundreds of civilians were said to have been killed in an American air raid.

"I will work nights and days, marshalling the moral force that I believe is in all the American people, to bring every pressure on our Government that the mass murder of the Iraqi people must cease."

His latest onslaught on America is likely to provoke a swift response from Washington, where Mr Farrakhan has already been branded a foreign agent. After visiting Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in Tripoli last month, Mr Farrakhan was reported to have accepted a \$1 billion (£640 million) donation from the Libyan leader to mobilise oppressed blacks in the Uni-

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Always on Page 2 and
in Weekend Money

Tennis professional's task is to serve up fitness routine as Russian leader enters electoral contest

Yeltsin coach calls the shots

WHEN President Yeltsin strode purposefully through the streets of Yekaterinburg, his home town, and even took a ride on a new Metro, his relaxed style and hearty demeanour left veteran Kremlin watchers stunned this week.

For a man who suffered two heart attacks and appeared physically unable to complete public duties last year, the sight of the Russian leader hitting the campaign trail in the sub-zero temperatures of the Urals was nothing short of miraculous.

How had Mr Yeltsin, 65, succeeded in sobering up and reinvigorating himself so convincingly only six weeks after

MOSCOW FILE
by RICHARD BEESTON

he was under strict medical supervision?

The clue seems to lie in a little noticed announcement last month about the appointment of Shamil Tarpishchev, a tennis professional and Olympic committee chairman, who was assigned to the Yeltsin re-election committee and entrusted with one of the



most important campaign tasks. A former Davis Cup player and Soviet team coach, Mr Tarpishchev, 47, is responsible for keeping Mr Yeltsin fit through the punishing four months of campaigning up to the June 16 election.

"My job is not so much to exhaust Boris Nikolayevich with training, but rather to

help him to lighten the stress and pressure of his work," he told a newspaper.

Like many of Mr Yeltsin's closest associates, Mr Tarpishchev's rise to power was almost accidental. The two met in 1988 when the President was abandoning his traditional loyalty to the good socialist team sport of volleyball in favour of the far more bourgeois pursuit of tennis.

The two men struck up an immediate friendship, which has endured in spite of criticism over the tennis professional's lucrative business interests in the import of alcoholic drinks.

There is concern, however, that he might bring some unorthodox practices to the presidential race. According to an American tennis professional, the Tatar-born coach has a habit of requesting challengers not to give the Kremlin leader difficult shots. That may work on court, but is unlikely to have much effect in the world of politics.



Shamil Tarpishchev, who is a close personal friend of the President

Taking out expensive insurance

SOME influential figures in Moscow's hierarchy are taking steps to protect themselves against the likelihood of a Communist President, Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist candidate and front-runner, has been given a taste of the lifestyle that awaits him if he makes it to high office. He flew to the recent

World Economic Forum in Davos on a private jet lent by a Russian banker and was ferried from the airport to the conference centre by the Russian envoy in his official limousine. "It is pathetic how everybody suddenly wants to be Zyuganov's friend," said one Moscow financier. "People will do anything for him."

Benefits from Kohl visit will provide boost for Kremlin

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

HELMUT KOHL, the German Chancellor, will wade this weekend into the muddy waters of the Russian presidential election campaign with a three-day visit to Boris Yeltsin, his old friend.

The trip is poorly timed, coming only days after President Yeltsin announced his intention to stand for re-election in June. There is little doubt that the Chancellor supports the Russian leader partly because he is, as one senior Bonn aide put it, "a man to be trusted".

President Yeltsin delivered on his promise to withdraw all Russian troops from Germany and Herr Kohl is still duly grateful. The bloody war in Chechnya is regarded in Bonn as untypical of Moscow's treatment of minorities.

Moreover, the alternative to Mr Yeltsin — the Communist favourite, Gennadi Zyuganov — is regarded in Bonn, as in Washington, as having unappealing policies.

The Chancellor's foreign policy advisers say that he will try, despite these sympathies, to keep out of the election campaign. This is a vain hope, for Herr Kohl comes bearing gifts.

A key component of Germany's policy towards Russia is to integrate it more closely with the West and thus ease Moscow's suspicions about Nato enlargement into Central Europe. Herr Kohl has

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Law Report February 17 1996 House of Lords

Home Secretary need not disclose reasons for removal certificate

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Abdil

Same v Same, Ex parte Gause
Before Lord Keith of Kinkel, Lord Jauncey of Tullichettle, Lord Mustill, Lord Slynn of Hadley and Lord Lloyd of Berwick

[Speeches February 15]

On appeals to special adjudicators against certificates of the Secretary of State for the Home Department that the claims of applicants for asylum that their removal to a third country would be contrary to the obligations of the United Kingdom under the Geneva Convention 1951 were "without foundation", the Home Secretary was not obliged to disclose all the material on which he had based the certificates.

The Home Secretary's statement that on the basis of his knowledge and previous experience he had no reason to believe that the third country would not comply with its Convention obligations had, in the absence of challenge, been admitted as sufficient evidence of the certificates.

The House of Lords by a majority (Lord Slynn dissenting on the first point and Lord Mustill and Lord Slynn dissenting on the second point) affirmed the majority decisions of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Neill and Lord Justice Peter Gibson, Lord Justice Steyn dissenting) (*The Times* April 25, 1994; [1994] Imm AR 402) allowing appeals by the Home Secretary and the special adjudicators from Mr Justice Sedley (*The Times* March 10, 1994), who had allowed applications by Mr Khalid Mohamed Abdil and Mr Abdifatah Abdilah Gause for judicial review of the Home Secretary's certificates and the "adjudicators' determinations".

Mr Ian Macdonald, QC and Miss Christina Fielden for the applicants; Mr David Pannick, QC and Mr Ian Ashford-Thom for the Home Secretary; Mr Rabinder Singh for the special adjudicators.

LORD LLOYD said that the applicants were Somalia nationals who had left Somalia and flown to Spain, where they had spent three and eight days respectively but not claimed asylum. They had then come to the United Kingdom where they had claimed asylum.

The Home Secretary had said in his decision letters:

"You are under paragraph 8(1)(c) of Schedule 2 to the Immigration Act 1971, returning to Spain which is a signatory to the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) (Cmnd 9171) [the Geneva Convention]."

The secretary of state, on the basis of his knowledge of the immigration policies and practices of Spain, and on previous experiences in returning passengers to Spain, has no reason to believe that, in the circumstances of your particular case, the authorities there would not comply with their obligations under the Convention.

Paragraph 8(1)(c) of the Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules 1993 provides that an application will normally be refused without substantive consideration if there is a safe third country to which the applicant can be sent. [He] can find no grounds for departing from this practice in your case. He therefore . . . certifies that your claim that your removal from the United Kingdom would be contrary to the United Kingdom's obligations under the Convention is without foundation as it does not raise any issue as to the United Kingdom's obligations under the Convention."

The special adjudicators had upheld the Home Secretary's certificates and dismissed the appeals. There had been no evidence before them that Spain was not a "safe third country".

The main ground of the applications for judicial review had been that the adjudicators had given proper consideration to that question. The judge had said:

"In a situation in which it is to be expected that most or all of the information about the asylum practices of third countries is in the hands of the secretary of state, it would be reasonable for the special adjudicator's independent duty of rigorous scrutiny by the secretary of state, having balanced the pros and cons and come to his own conclusion about the safety of a third country, could rely upon the face of the certificate which he accordingly grants as sufficient to sustain the certificate on appeal, so long as the asylum-seeker is unable to produce enough of his or her own evidence to controvert it . . .

" . . . given the secretary of state's monitoring role and his opportunity to gather information . . . it is incumbent, in my view, on the Home Office representative before it . . .

Mr Pannick argued that an implied obligation to disclose all relevant documents was wholly

SECRETARY CERTIFIED THAT THE CLAIM OF THE APPLICANT FOR ASYLUM WAS WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

Paragraph 5 provided: "(3) . . . a claim is without foundation if . . . (a) it does not raise any issue as to the United Kingdom's obligations under the Convention . . ."

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" . . . given the secretary of state's monitoring role and his opportunity to gather information . . . it is incumbent, in my view, on the Home Office representative before it . . .

Mr Pannick argued that an implied obligation to disclose all relevant documents was wholly

a special adjudicator to disclose not only what facts are relied on in support of the certificate (and they may in many cases be simply that nothing at all is known to the defendant of the third country), but to disclose any factual material presented by the opposite direction."

Lord Justice Steyn had said that Parliament must have intended to create an effective system for safeguarding the fundamental rights of refugees.

If the system set out in the legislation was not by itself effective for that purpose, then it had to be supplemented by the common law in aid of procedural fairness. Fairness required that the Home Secretary should disclose all material facts tending to prove or disprove the safety of the third country.

The main issue in the appeal to the House of Lords was whether the Home Secretary had been obliged to give discovery of the material on which he had based his "without foundation" certificate. The judge had said that issue was decided by the Convention.

The applicants had appealed against the Home Secretary's certificates to special adjudicators under section 8(1)(c) of the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993. The procedure was spell out in Schedule 2 and the Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules (SI 1993 No 166). Paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 made provision for a special appeal procedure where the Home

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No infringement over use of common laudatory word

British Sugar plc v James Robertson and Sons

Before Mr Justice Jacob
[Judgment February 7]

Where a trader had registered as a trade mark a common laudatory word which he used on his product, it was not an infringement of the trade mark for another trader to use the same word in a descriptive way on another product.

Mr Justice Jacob sitting in the Chancery Division dismissed in a reserved judgment an action by the plaintiffs, British Sugar plc, for registered trade mark infringement and allowed a counterclaim by the defendants, James Robertson and Sons, for revocation of the registration.

Section 1 of the Trade Marks Act 1994, which implemented Directive 89/104/EEC of December 21, 1988 (OJ No L40/1), provides: "(1) . . . a trade mark means any sign capable of being represented graphically which is capable of distinguishing goods or services of one undertaking from those of other undertakings.

Section 10 provides: "(2) A person infringes a registered trade mark if he uses in the course of trade a sign where because — (a) the sign is identical with the trade mark and is used in relation to goods and services similar to those for which the trade mark is registered . . . there exists a likelihood of confusion on the part of the public, which includes the likelihood of association with the trade mark."

Mr David Young, QC for the plaintiffs; Mr Graham Shipley for the defendants.

MR JUSTICE JACOB said that the plaintiffs' range of "Silver Spoon" and "Robertson's" prominently displayed.

The defendants' use of "Treat" could not cause the plaintiffs any commercial harm. None the less, if there was an infringement of a validly registered trade mark the defendants had to stop using "Treat". The defendants argued that they did not use "Treat" as a trade mark so there could be no infringement under section 10. The question was whether a non-trade mark use fell within section 10.

His Lordship said that there was no reason to limit the provisions of section 10 or to put any gloss on its language. In effect, a registered trade mark was used in the course of trade and that to consider whether that use fell within the subsections.

Because "Treat" was the mark registered and was clearly used by the defendants in the case fell to be considered under section 10(2)(a) relating to an identical mark and similar goods. In supermarkets the squeezable plastic container of "Treat" was placed in the section for desserts and ice-cream topping. In 1992 "Treat" was registered under the Trade Marks Act 1938 as a trade mark for desserts, sauces and syrups.

The defendants used "Robertson's" for a range of jams and preserves but in 1995 they launched a new coffee-flavoured sweet spread in an oval jar labelled "Robertson's Toffee Treat". In supermarkets the squeezeable plastic container of "Treat" was placed in the section for desserts and ice-cream toppings.

The plaintiffs did not allege passing-off but attempted to show that there was confusion between the two products and damage to their goodwill.

His Lordship said there was no evidence of confusion. The plaintiffs' product had a different purpose, topping rather than spread, and different presentations, and both products were sold with their respective house trade marks.

of goods it would surely be wrong if he then in practice got protection for a wide range of goods. If a man wanted wide protection he could always ask for it and would get it if his claim was justified.

The purpose of the conception of "goods of the same description" in the 1938 Act was to prevent marks from conflicting not only for their respective actual goods but for a penumbra also. The purpose of "similar goods" in the 1994 Act and EC Directive was to provide protection and separation for a similar sort of penumbra.

Relevant factors in considering whether or not there was similarity were the respective uses and users of the respective goods, their physical nature, the respective trade channels through which they reached the market, the shelves on which they were likely to be found in supermarkets and the extent to which they were competitive. Taking all factors into consideration there was no infringement in the present case.

Mr Justice Jacob then went on to consider whether, if he was wrong in his views thus far, the defendants had a defence under section 11 of the 1994 Act, which states: "(2) A registered trade mark is not infringed by — (a) the use of indications concerning the kind, quality . . . intended purpose . . . or other characteristics of the goods . . .

In the important sort of case where a mark owner only got registration on the basis of actual distinctiveness for a narrow class of goods it would surely be wrong if he then in practice got protection for a wide range of goods. If a man wanted wide protection he could always ask for it and would get it if his claim was justified.

On the counterclaim, His Lordship concluded that there was no evidence that when "Treat" was registered as a trade mark it was distinctive or that the majority of the public regarded the word alone as having some trade mark significance to others.

His Lordship said that there was no reason why a member of the public should take the mark as a badge of origin. The defendant's use of "Treat" was not as a trade mark.

On the counterclaim, His Lordship concluded that there was no evidence that when "Treat" was registered as a trade mark it was distinctive or that the majority of the public regarded the word alone as having some trade mark significance to others.

His Lordship said that there was no reason why a member of the public should take the mark as a badge of origin. The defendant's use of "Treat" was not as a trade mark.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held when dismissing applications by Virgin Television Ltd, UK Television Developments Ltd and New Century Television Ltd for judicial review of the decision of the Independent Television Commission on October 27, 1995 to award the Channel 5 licence to Channel 5 Broadcasting Ltd.

The applicants submitted first that it was clear from CSB's original application that there was no binding commitment from shareholders beyond the £20m contained in the shareholders' agreement. The statement of intent to support CSB's application was not expressed in broad terms and accordingly CSB had failed to comply with the statutory application requirements to provide adequate funding information. In those circumstances the commission, they submitted, should have rejected the application.

Following the invitation to apply, CSB had submitted a business plan which showed their total shareholders' funding commitment to be £20m. The commission's sensitivity test showed that a worst case scenario would require funding of £30m and although CSB's application referred to a £10m bank debt facility it was not clear whether that was in addition to the £20m.

Accordingly the commission wrote to seek clarification and it was common ground that it was entitled to do so.

CSB clarified the position by saying, inter alia, that while there was no contingency beyond the £20m the shareholders remained fully committed and were sure to provide funds in the event of a shortfall. Later, but before the award of the licence, it formally committed its shareholders to further funding of £100m.

Mr Anthony Scrivenor, QC and Mr Timothy Straker for Virgin; Sir Patrick Neill, QC and Mr Alan Griffiths for NCTV; Mr Alan Moses, QC and Mr Peter Duffy for UKTV; Mr Jonathan Sampson, QC and Ms Diana Rose for the commission; Mr Michael Beloff, QC and Mr Robert Hildyard, QC for CSB.

LORD JUSTICE HENRY said that the commission was an expert body established under the Broadcasting Act 1990 and was by section 28 of the Act obliged to secure the provision of Channel 5. On November 1, 1994 the com-

mision published its invitation to apply for the Channel 5 licence, the period for which was 10 years.

The closing date for applications was May 2, 1995. Four bids were received: one from the applicants and that of CSB. Both Virgin and CSB placed the same cash bid while that of NCTV lower. Virgin and UKTV failed the commission's quality threshold and as there were no exceptional circumstances the award was to CSB.

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It was clear, their Lordships said, that for a proposal to satisfy the statutory requirements as amended by the rules of render it was not necessary that there should have been a binding commitment in the proposal in respect of the £20m potential funding, rising from the worst case scenario.

What there had been was an indication of commitment that the necessary funding sufficient to satisfy the commission would be achievable by the date of grant of the licence. The commission had clearly been satisfied that that was the case. Accordingly there was no illegality in the commission accepting as compliant the proposal containing the commitment in the form in which it had been.

Their Lordships next turned to consider whether the commission was entitled to take account of the additional £100m provided by CSB's consortium shareholders' agreement.

Under the terms of section 5(4) of the 1990 Act, it was perfectly clear, their Lordships said, that during the period between receipt of the application and the grant of the licence the commission could require an applicant to furnish such additional information as the commission might reasonably require as to the applicant's projected financial position during the period for which the licence would be in force.

The question which had been put was precisely the kind which could have been asked under the section and in view of the fact that Parliament did not envisage the issue of financial sustainability of

the programme of the licence period being artificially frozen at the date of application any more than the invitation to apply did.

The applicants further contended that there were two limitations on that statutory right: first, those imposed by the terms of the invitation to apply and second, the accepted requirement of fairness between the applicants.

The invitation to apply stated that no amendments nor any new material could be introduced to an application subsequent to its delivery nor would any applicant be allowed to enhance its application once it had been submitted.

Having considered the wording of the invitation their Lordships said that the only limitation on the statutory power to seek further information under section 5(4) related to the nature of the proposed proposals. Answering a request for further information as to the extent and commitment of funding was neither amending the application nor introducing any new material. Any other construction of the invitation to apply would have meant that no requests for further information could be made under section 5(4).

The commission rigorously applied the rules that late received applications or additions to applications were not entertained and that no additions might be made to either the cash bid or the programme proposals. The reason for that

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BBC Symphony Chorus, Prog Inc Shostakovich Scherzo;
Op. 8 Op. 7; Prokofiev Dreams, Chateaubriand Room, RPH
2.30pm £12, free with conc. etc. (200 unreserved seating)

Sun 3 Feb Ensemble Modern play Frank Zappa
8.00 Music from The Yellow Submarine £6, 4.75 by Masonite, 8
Desert by Zappa (noted for his work with Pink Floyd, accompanied by a
string quartet) by video at 8.30pm. £6.50. 24-25

Wed 7 Feb Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
7.30 Lorin Maazel (cond), Julian Rachlin (vn) Shostak: Finlandia;
Violin Concerto; Bartók Concerto for Orchestra. £6-25

Thu 8 Feb Mstislav Rostropovich conducts Tchaikovsky
22 Feb Young Musicians' Orchestra: Prokofiev, Romeo & Juliet; Violin
Concerto; Symphony No. 5. £2-25

Fri 9 Feb The London Philharmonic Resident at the RPH.
22 Feb Sergei Rachmaninoff (cond) Anne Akiko Meyers (vn) Haydn:
Sym No. 9; Salomé-Sieber Havemann: Introduction & Rondo
capriccioso; Mendelssohn Sym No. 3. £25

Sunday 25 February at 7.30pm

the Bach Choir
Penderecki Te Deum*
Walton Orb and Scopre*
Walton Belshazzar's Feast**

Alison Pearce soprano
Jane Irwin contralto • Neil Jenkins tenor
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Philharmonia Orchestra
Conductors
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The Bach Choir is a registered charity £28-£55

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Nicholas Michalakis
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PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA
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Nikolai Demidenko, piano
Strauss Don Juan
Schumann Piano Concerto in A
Dvorák Symphony No 8
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Last Hungarian Waltz; No. 2 - Czerny Fantasy - Salomé Dance
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Sun 4 Mar Pioneer of London Philharmonic Young
Fab Soloist of the Year The London Philharmonic
7.45 Andrei Gheorghiu (cond) Rachmaninoff: Piano
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Mon 5 Mar Albany Brass Quartet RPH Associate Artists
19 Feb Beethoven: Symphonies Nos 1-9; 20th Century
Symphony Concerto; Shostak: String Quartet No. 14. £20-£24

Fri 9 Mar Mostly Mozart Concerto Festival
2 Feb London Soloists Chamber Orchestra
7.45 David Jonckheer (cond) Aaron Sherr (pno).
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Fri 10 Mar Tribal Music of Iran - Mayr Ensemble.
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■ MUSICALS

How Des McAnuff brought *The Who's Tommy* to Broadway, and now into the West End



■ BASE NOTES

Is *The Horse Whisperer* with Robert Redford next on the agenda for Emma Thompson?

THE TIMES ARTS

■ BASE NOTES

Chess, Tim Rice's collaboration with the Abba boys, hits the road on its tenth anniversary

■ BASE NOTES

... and it's *The Tempest* performed in Regent's Park for Denis Quilley this summer

■ BASE NOTES

Horse play for Emma?

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Hand the pinball crown to him

The Broadway hit *The Who's Tommy* opens here soon. Matt Wolf meets the man who made it all possible

The New York success of *The Who's Tommy*, which arrives in London next week, altered the face of Broadway in several ways. At the time, Broadway was reaching out to embrace new and different material — and, with it, an audience uninterested in (or unaware of) the latest offering from Andrew Lloyd Webber, Cy Coleman, or Stephen Sondheim. *Tommy*, Pete Townshend's landmark 1969 rock opera, provided the material to attract that audience.

Running for more than two years, the \$6 million show won five Tony Awards, and succeeded in winning over a group of theatre-goers who might have been expected to put up the most resistance, the critics. Frank Rich, then the *New York Times'* much-feared chief critic, wrote: "The show is so theatrically fresh and emotionally raw that newcomers to *Tommy* will think it was born yesterday."

Perhaps only the advancing years of many Tony voters kept them from winning the top prize, Best Musical. That went instead to *Kiss of the Spider Woman* — a product of exactly the old school (director Hal Prince, composer-lyricists John Kander and Fred Ebb) that *The Who's Tommy* leaves behind.

Townshend's pulsating music, the soundtrack to a troubled era that sounds no less urgent a quarter of a century on, was by no means the production's lone attraction. Stage versions of *Tommy* have been tried before, including one in the West End co-produced by the Who themselves, with Alton Love as the messianic *Tommy*, but never with lasting success.

The version that opens next week, starring Paul Keating as

the deaf, dumb and blind kid and Kim Wilde as his mother, should change all that. On Broadway, the music and story were bolstered by a spectacular staging that copied theatrical sleight-of-hand — 54 projectors were trained on 18 panels at the rear of the stage — with real emotional bite. What could have been no more than an ear-splitting song cycle became a dynamic, through-sung play about the coming to maturity of an emotionally scarred child.

Of the evening's many participants, it is possible the show's director and co-librettist Des McAnuff may be its real star. Without him, *Tommy* might have been just another gimmick, a *Buddy* or *Beetlemania* to

which nostalgic audiences could sing along, and then forget.

The Who's Tommy pushed McAnuff to the front of that list of directors who can be entrusted with a major musical, and it brought him a second Tony for Best Director to set alongside his 1983 win for *Big River*, a musical adaptation of *Huckleberry Finn* that was probably too American to receive a major London production.

Last season, he was again up for a Tony (he lost to Hal Prince's *Show Boat*) for his revival of Frank Loesser's *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, which begins its second year on Broadway next month.

But the heart of McAnuff's musical education beats, not in traditional Broadway fare, but in the likes of Townshend's super-loud pop. The hash-smoking adolescent growing up in Canada "grew up listening to rock'n'roll, rhythm and blues. I first saw Bob Dylan play when I was 11".

McAnuff, 43, who was

raised in the town of Guelph, some 40 miles from Toronto, and studied theatre at Ryerson, a Toronto polytechnic. "The musical seemed very foreign to me," he says. "It wasn't until *Hair* came along that I really thought that maybe there was room in the theatre for music I liked."

Tommy had an obvious allure at the time, although McAnuff argues that the album has since been misunderstood.

"A lot of people, including me, first listened to the album when they were

high. I was in a band called Isaac, we were rehearsing at our roadies' place, and a guy named Dennis Butt had bought the album. People get

the idea that *Tommy* was this kind of pro-drug thing when, in fact, it was completely the opposite. Townshend had quit drugs. Our stage version is a much more thoughtful look at what it was about."

The idea to put *Tommy* back on stage appealed to McAnuff as a way to reinvigorate a genre — the musical — constantly said to be dying. "I wanted to bring to the theatre the music I play and listen to, which, for the most part, is electric music, from zydeco to boop."

"It has always struck me as peculiar that the only music that tends to flourish in the theatre comes out of the music of 40 or 50 years ago. While

other people, the Canadian Ballet included, had taken the album and maybe done things with it, no one had done it with Pete Townshend's co-operation; there were a lot of unofficial versions of *Tommy*."

McAnuff launched the new show at the La Jolla Playhouse in southern California, the enterprising regional theatre of which he was artistic director from 1983 to 1994. Indeed, all four of his Broadway forays — the other is the Lee Blessing two-hander *A Walk in the Woods*, later seen on the West End in a different production with Alec Guinness — began at the non-profit Playhouse, Broadway, McAnuff insists, was never a goal. (He and Ray

Davies of the Kirks collaborated on a musical, *80 Days*, that has yet to travel beyond California.)

As *Tommy* headed east, some objected to a new ending that brings the second act to an emotional climax in keeping with the supposedly kinder, gentler 1990s. Didn't the emphasis on family reconciliation sell short both the Who and the incendiary times that spawned *Tommy*?

McAnuff smiles wryly: "Basically, *Tommy* has a sadistic, abusive cousin. His uncle is an alcoholic child abuser. He watches his father shoot his mother's lover before his eyes — it's a very normal family

which, as far as I can tell, has

very little to do with what Bill Clinton or Dan Quayle would describe as family values."

The criticism that the piece has been softened is somewhat of a kneejerk reaction.

McAnuff says: "People want *Tommy* to get killed at the end; they have it in their minds that *Tommy* dies, which of course is not true."

"The show is about someone's journey towards a kind of enlightenment, so there's a resolution at the end. It's about a spiritual release that happens on stage every evening."

● Previews of *The Who's Tommy* begin on Tuesday at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London WC2R 0JF, 379 5299. The show opens on March 5



Des McAnuff, the director of *The Who's Tommy*, opened the door to stage success for a rock opera that had previously only really lived on record

CONCERTS: An extended banquet of one of Chopin's Parisian contemporaries. Plus Järvi displays his growing authority as a conductor

Come into my study

Jack Gibbons
Queen Elizabeth Hall

by those obsessive rhythms, clangorous pedal points, spiralling sequences and banal melodies, Gibbons ties it all up with aplomb and bears at the audience like a small boy, delighted with every minute of it and ready, I dare say, to start all over again.

Gibbons empathises, too, with the naivety which suddenly smiles at the heart of Alkan's writing: a moment of harmonic delight, a sudden window opening on to a fragment of a chorale, a passage in sugar-spun thirds which lasts just long enough to be truly ingenuous.

He helped us through the Symphony by abstracting its several themes with evident glee. He waded us at the start with an eager, child-like performance of the whirr which is *Comme le vent* and, I am sure, will have given his generous and imaginative music respects Alkan's own insistence on clarity, precision and control — with virtually no rubato — in this most hugely romantic of music. And when one is feeling battered to death

In all the colours of experience

CBSO/Paavo Järvi
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham

pal guest conductor of the CBSO in the early 1980s.

There are likenesses between the two, but Paavo has his own precise and economical from-the-wrist baton technique and his own personality. If he seems to be disproportionately concerned by the colour and quality of the orchestral sound, it is not at the expense of rhythmic interest. His account of Mozart's Symphony No 28 in C, K200, was certainly pretty in sound, and there was just an occasional inclination to finger, but it was disciplined in ensemble and lacked little in vitality.

The major challenge was Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony, a score which Järvi conducts from memory and to which he brings an admirably fresh

approach. Some of the colouring, particularly in the first movement, was so sensational that, by ordinary standards, it seemed excessive. In fact, he did nothing which is not actually prescribed by the composer. If other conductors make less of what is written, it is probably in the belief — which this interpretation tended to confirm — that if they touch on the extremes at too early a stage, the rest of the work will seem tame. Happily, on this occasion there was enough rhythmic energy in reserve and enough imagination to present the last movement in almost as fierce a light as the first.

The importance of having a Rattle in long-term charge of an orchestra such as the CBSO was demonstrated by the performance of Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto. The soloist was Eduardo Vassallo, principal cellist and an instrumentalist fully equipped for a solo career. If he

failed to sustain the tension in

the cadenza, which must be

the longest soliloquy in the con-

certo repertoire, he was eloquent

enough in the slow movement,

inclusively ironic, brilliantly witty and unfailingly secure

elsewhere.

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In the name of Scott, go!

Vernon Bogdanor says MPs should force resignations

The Scott inquiry was established, the Attorney-General declared in 1992, "to examine whether ministerial responsibility should be pinned in any particular area". Whether Sir Richard has done this successfully must be for Parliament and people to decide. The procedural irregularities, so cogently identified by Lord Howe, make it difficult to accept the Report as a final verdict. Its findings should be seen more as a point of departure than a terminus.

Scott does not, as that master of news management, Ian Lang, would have us believe, find the Government "not guilty" on all counts. Admittedly, the Report rejects the wilder charges — that ministers connived at exporting lethal arms to Iraq, or conspired to send innocent people to prison. Such charges should never have been made.

If the Report really exonerates the Government, why have ministers not accepted it? Malcolm Rifkind, speaking on *The World Tonight* on Thursday, confessed that the Government in fact rejected two of Scott's conclusions. These are that Sir Nicholas Lyell was personally at fault in his handling of the Matrix Churchill prosecution, and that William Waldegrave failed to comply with the principle of ministerial accountability. Such serious charges, if proved, should entail resignation.

The Report finds Lyell's interpretation of the law on public interest immunity claims in the Matrix Churchill case to be "unsound". His advice that ministers had an automatic duty to sign such certificates, was never plausible. For if the signature were automatic, why should it need a minister to give it, rather than a junior official? A ministerial signature was an assertion that it would be injurious to the public interest to release the documents. Ministers should not have let themselves be reduced to the status of clerks.

The one minister who had qualms, Michael Heseltine, was mistakenly told that he was under a legal duty to sign a certificate, although he believed that the public interest required disclosure. The advice Heseltine was given was "based on a fundamental misconception of the principles of public interest immunity law". Worse still, a vital letter which Heseltine sent to the Attorney-General shortly before the Matrix Churchill trial, making clear his view of the limited nature of the certificate which he had signed, was left unread for at least three weeks. Scott finds this "astonishing".

Sir Nicholas seems also not to have informed either the prosecuting counsel or the judge of Heseltine's belief that the documents should be disclosed. As a result, the prosecution in the Matrix Churchill case argued that the documents were irrelevant to the defence and that the judge should not inspect them. Fortunately, the judge rejected this argument.

Public interest immunity certificates seem not have been

Parliament risks losing its capacity to bring ministers to account

plainly inappropriate as to be incapable of being sustained by serious argument". Waldegrave, Scott concludes, "consistently failed" to comply with the standard set by the Government's own document, *Questions of Procedure for Ministers*, "and, more important, failed to discharge the obligations imposed by the constitutional principle of Ministerial accountability".

It is now for Parliament and, in particular, for Conservative MPs to determine whether Scott has indeed pinned responsibility on Lyell and Waldegrave. The auguries are not promising. Governments have used the cloak of ministerial responsibility to ensure that ministerial faults go unpunished. The convention of ministerial responsibility, perhaps the central principle of our constitution, has a crucial weakness: it cannot be enforced against a recalcitrant government.

Thus perhaps the deepest lesson of the Scott inquiry is that Parliament is in danger of losing its capacity to bring ministers to account. If that happens, there will be a search for alternative methods of accountability, for some reference point beyond Parliament so that executive power can be made subject to proper control.

It is, then, not only ministers who will be on trial when the Commons debates the Scott report, but Parliament itself as it seeks to prove that it remains what it has always claimed to be, the grand inquest of the nation.

The author is Reader in Government at Oxford.

Grassed off

THE COLLAPSE of the IRA ceasefire has achieved what the elements have always singularly failed to do. For the first time, MPs have been driven from their beloved media playground, College Green, as part of a massive security clampdown at Westminster.

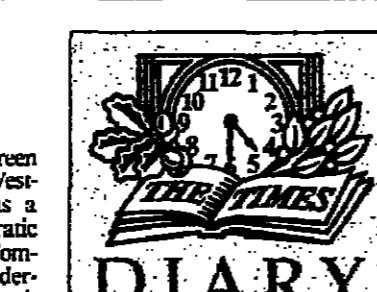
They have been advised by the Sergeant at Arms's office that the scrubby patch of grass is off-limits for interviews with broadcasters and journalists until further notice. Officially called Abingdon-Green

but known as College Green because of its proximity to Westminster School, the lawn has a crucial role in the democratic process when the House of Commons is sitting. During the leadership election last summer, it became a battleground as TV crews camped there around the clock.

Sir Teddy Taylor, one of the most familiar faces, is mortified. "It's desperately sad and just one of the many problems we have with this non-democratic lifestyle."



Keep off the lawn: MPs must stay away from College Green



● The train from Liverpool back to London after the Requiem Mass for the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool, the Most Rev Derek Worlock, on Thursday night, was heaving with clerics. On arrival at Euston, the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Basil Hume, sailed down an escalator, parting the episcopal pockets and deliberating with two priests over whether he had the right change for the tube fare.

Do I like that

WHETHER a former England football manager, when even his days at a struggling First Division club are done? Graham Taylor, the man dubbed "the Turnip" by the tabloids and forced to resign as man-

ager of Wolverhampton Wanderers in the face of hostile public opinion last year, has a new life on the party circuit.

At a champagne-and-oysters bash in Chelsea on Thursday night, he was tanned and relaxed and talked of a new love. "I have been really getting into the theatre," he explained. "It's wonderful. A completely different drama to the football field. I saw *The Entertainer* the other day. Do you know it? Marvellous stuff."

The menu at the thorrorabot will include such delicacies as shark — preferably buried for up to 13 years before consumption — pickled rams' testicles, sheep's heads and the Icelandic schnapps, Brennivin (more commonly known as Black

Death). Paxman is slightly dismayed. "What, no endangering species? How disappointing. And no puffin, what a shame. I am now known in the office as the puffin strangler," he said.

Spaced out
AFTER the revelations this week that Mensa's magazine is carrying advertisements for sperm donors to create a race of super-brains, news comes of an even more alien

project. A band of the throbbing eggheads have set up a Mensa UFO study group.

The first official newsletter has been beamed down on to my desk. One contributor outlines the nine "extra-terrestrial types" in contact with Earth and notes that there are alien bases in the US, China and Australia, but not in Britain.

Mensa member Sir Clive Sinclair welcomes the new group. "It's an interesting subject, but it's not my particular hobby."

Time for tea

LORD BROCKET, the disgraced peer now serving five years in jail for fraud, is settling in nicely at Bedford Prison. He is said to have landed himself a cushy job serving tea and buns to prison warders. "Prisoners quite look up to him because he has this air of authority, having been an officer in the army," says one warden.

Mad Mag

THE hot tip from Hollywood is that Robert De Niro is lined up for the latest literary blockbuster. After all the heating bosom of recent Jane Austen adaptations, the pub-

supported by the Prince's Trust which has much in common with the White Paper. But at the Tetbury meeting, a widely-held view was: "The trouble with policy is that it is made by politicians." The parties, as we come up to a General Election, are waging each other to be seen to be tough on crime and tough on drugs. Anything less will cost votes. As a result we have a policy that, on the surface, looks and sounds good, but whether it will seriously tackle and begin to overcome the real drugs problem is open to doubt.

It is open to doubt because the thinking behind the policy is too shallow, and it is shallow because senior politicians of all parties seem frightened to look too deep.

Bing Spear, the former head of the Home Office Drugs Inspectorate, in his last public statement *just before* he died last year, called on politicians to re-think their entire approach to the drugs problem.

He wrote: "Few British politicians seem prepared to dip more than a tentative toe into the debate, far less engage in a fundamental rethink. But until we have that rethink, violent deaths in Tetbury and communities like it will continue."

The author is Vicar of Tetbury.

Prince Charles's local vicar, John Hawthorne, on how a rural town copes with drugs and violence

An everyday horror story of country life

from the gutters of the inner cities, as many imagine, that is merely where they end up.

The late idyll that is Tetbury has been shattered — shattered by eight recent violent deaths, mostly related to drugs. A fortnight ago, more than 250 people packed themselves into the local primary school for a public meeting called by the local churches and with the personal backing of the Prince. A council meeting was postponed so that members could attend. Next Monday, another meeting will be held.

Many brave families came to the meeting, families who were prepared to speak of their own tragedies. They were solid, respectable families. Drug addicts in rural communities like Tetbury are mostly young, white and middle class. They do not come

at Downview Prison in Surrey since 1992. When the programme began, the prison was just 12 per cent drug-free; the figure is now almost 100 per cent. The Trust has just begun work in Coldring Prison, and will shortly tackle Penitentiary. But it was only last year that the Prison Service began funding the Downview project.

Despite the seductive title of last May's White Paper, *Tackling Drugs Together*, Government policy and practice appear out of step. Until they are in step, the vicious circle of drugs, crime, prison and back to drugs will continue. The White Paper quotes an estimate that £864 million of acquisitive crime a year is heroin-related. This is £38 million *more* than the Government's estimate for the entire Government annual expenditure on tackling drug misuse across the UK. It costs the taxpayer £24,000 a year to

keep someone in prison, whereas an intensive RAPi programme costs a mere £1,800 per prisoner.

The people of Tetbury have galvanised themselves into action. Youth leaders and social workers, with representatives of the schools, police, parents and the community at large have signed up as one to come together, urgently, to take practical steps to fight the drugs menace in the town before there is yet another funeral. They aim to form an action and awareness group, working with and for young people and families.

They are determined, too, to find means of relieving the boredom and frustration that all young people find in small towns and villages everywhere, and which make them easy targets for the pushers and dealers. At present, Gloucestershire has an imaginative drugs strategy, actively

Why you never tip an equal

Service charges force customers to pay and be robbed, or refuse and be humiliated. The law should ban them

I rather think that it is I who should be called to settle the row now going on about restaurant charges, though none of the restaurateurs has as yet even asked my opinion. More fools they.

To begin with, the fracas is not just about hiked prices — those have been going on for many years, and the customers likewise have been complaining since — well, since ... the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat ... (Mind you, there is another oil about being cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field, which suggests that Adam and Eve were vegetarians. I should sincerely hope not.)

But now to the subject I was supposed to be discussing: the Earl of Bradford's assault, not on restaurant prices, but on restaurant money tricks. The Earl has put forward a measure, called the Restaurant (Service and Cover Charges) Bill, the purpose of which is to bring Britain into line with the rest of Western Europe in the matter of paying for meals. Let me make all clear.

Except Britain. Except Britain.

In Britain, your bill can include — openly and without blushing from the patron — separate cover charges, separate vegetables (this is not a joke), separate coffee, even separate *pétis-fours* (this is also not a joke). And there is no rule covering all these things in all restaurants: two restaurants side by side in the same street can be charging in vastly different ways.

The Earl of Bradford — three cheers for him: no, six — has now taken up the cudgels, and if he wants a cudgel with nails sticking out, I'm his man.

Naturally, most of the most expensive restaurants are screaming the place down: just look at a few here. But before you start to say the measure not just of the prices but much more significantly, of the way the restaurants wriggle out of their claims to be modest when the bills come.

For instance, at Kensington Place (which has the remarkable honour of being the noisiest restaurant in London, "the service charge is left to the discretion of the customer ... although parties of nine or more are told there is a fixed charge of 12½ per cent". Then comes the *coup de grâce*: "... if for any reason a party questions this, we would shrug and refund it," says Tim Brice, the



manager. "... Happily, so far, no one has complained." Happily, so far, no one has complained.

Oh, yes? Just picture the scene: here is a diner, just finishing his meal. There has been no complaint about the food and wine and service. But the diner doesn't want to pay for the service, and he refuses to tip. A certain *froideur* would ensue, would it not?

Or take the same road to the Font de la Tour, which is owned by the Terence Conran Group (as is everything except Mount Everest, and there is a bid out for that now) — and which demands 12½ per cent irrespective of the number of the party.

"Should a customer question the charge," says its man, "I would ask if anything was wrong, but he or she would not be forced to pay the tip."

Just one more James Ward of Orso, near Covent Garden, says: "Tipping is discretionary, while there is a fixed service charge of 12½ per cent on parties of 10 or more, there would be no question of enforcing the charge if the customer did not want to pay."

The only words fitting this catalogue are "Come off it". Legally, of course, the service charges (which, in a very great number of restaurants, including some well-known ones, are dreadful or invisible), need not be

paid, and that is the screen behind which so many restaurateurs hide. But dear reader and eater, have you ever seen, in a respectable restaurant, a customer raising his voice not to blame the food with which he is wholly content, but to argue about the tipping? No, dear reader and eater, you haven't. Nor have I. Nor has anybody else. Nor does the picture need a very large major-domo to browbeat the customer who refuses a tip, in whatever guise.

Let me turn the story just a little. One day, in New York, I was dining alone, but when I had finished my meal (a very good one, as I recall), I saw a friend on the other side of the restaurant, who beckoned me over. He motioned me to sit down, and he was very angry at something connected with the tip. I calmed him down, and another friend joined us. In helping my first friend to stop seething, the third voice said words that I have never forgotten, though this all happened a good many decades ago. He said: "You never tip an equal."

I have used those words in countless forms and places, and with countless effects. For they are packed with meaning, are they not? I look up from my desk at *The Times* and I see a colleague, a colleague who has recently given me a bit of help. I have thanked him, but in doing so, I would never have thought of giving him money, nor would he have thought to take it. You never tip an equal.

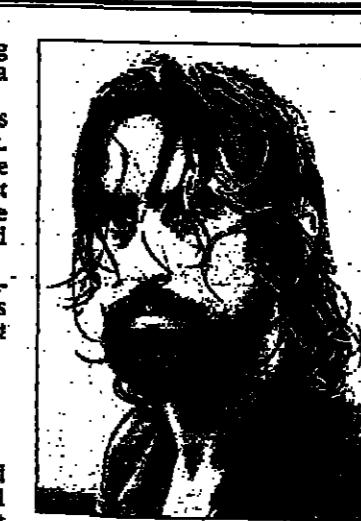
When you think of it, do you not feel that the entire business of tipping is not only distasteful, but shocking and almost evil? During my first visit to New Zealand (and I hope it was the first of many), one of the most striking items that I took into my mind and heart was the fact that there was in New Zealand no tipping.

It wasn't a rule, much less a law; but the weight off my shoulders when I learned that wonderful truth will never fade from my memory.

Come, Lord Bradford and your colleagues: there will be Members of the House of Commons, and also some in the Lords, who would like to scupper your splendid Bill: I regret to say that (some? many? all?) of those who fight it are in one way or another tied up with the catering and restaurant world.

The last stand of the "Keep tipping alive" team will be a false and indeed almost criminal claim: that tipping has to go on because, in many places, the tippers cannot live decently without tips. It answers itself: try using decent wages for those who have none. Meanwhile, let us remember those potent words: You never tip an equal.

I have used those words in countless forms and places, and with countless effects. For they are packed with meaning, are they not? I look up from my desk at *The Times* and I see a colleague, a colleague who has



Convincing convict: De Niro

lie seems to have an insatiable appetite for filmed versions of the classics — and *Great Expectations*, set in a contemporary context, is next on the list.

Robert De Niro, who has a good line in madmen, is to play the escaped convict Magwitch, who so terrorises young Pip. With De Niro's penchant for "the method", it might be wise to steer clear of graveyards in the marshes for a bit.



WAR CRIMES TIGHTROPE

Where justice and reconciliation walk together

Richard Goldstone has been entrusted with a task that is as hazardous as it is momentous. The South African jurist is the chief prosecutor for the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Working with specially-devised judicial methods — and an institution not seen since the Nuremberg trials — he has to walk daily along a taut tightrope, retaining always a balance between the importance of justice in Bosnia and the need for reconciliation. Mr Justice Goldstone's tightrope is tied at one end to Bosnia's past, and at the other end to the country's future. It is tied at a great height, from which a fall would be calamitous, and is shaken constantly by the blood-stained hands of those who fear the tribunal and its consequences.

In the circumstances, the chief prosecutor needs to advance with an assured step and a clear head. Fortunately, he has both. His announcement on Wednesday that the tribunal is about to indict the first Bosnian Muslims for suspected war crimes was important proof of the tribunal's impartiality, and confirms the chief prosecutor's high reputation for fairness and rigour.

Put bluntly, the announcement could not have come at a better time. A fortnight ago, the Bosnian Government arrested two sides to Ratko Mladić, the military commander of the Bosnian Serbs. Unlike General Mladić himself, the aides, thought to be war criminals, have not yet been indicted by the tribunal. Should they then have been arrested? The Bosnian Serbs thought not, and angrily broke off dealings with Ifor, the Nato-led implementation force. As if acknowledging the question marks which hovered over their actions, the Bosnian Government, very correctly, passed responsibility for the men arrested to Mr Justice Goldstone's tribunal. Yet the chief prosecutor recognised the need to assuage Bosnian Serb sentiment: he has done so by making clear that the Muslims have their "bad guys" too.

The tribunal has a mandate to indict, try and imprison perpetrators of war crimes, whether Serb, Croat or Muslim. The judicial process is intended to satisfy a hunger for justice and retribution in a land scarred by war: this hunger cannot, and should not, be ignored. But care must also be taken to ensure that the process of ethnic reconciliation — which is the only basis for lasting peace in the area — is not itself disturbed by the war crimes trials. The judicial process must assist, not work against, the reconstruction of Bosnia.

However painful to the victims and their relatives, it should be obvious that every last villager who torched his neighbour's house will not be indicted. To do so would be to set community against community once again, at a time when the delicate process of reintegration has scarcely begun. There is need, instead, to pick carefully those who should stand trial, and then to ensure that those picked do not escape the course of justice.

There is a powerful political case — which does no violence to moral imperatives — for identifying, and pursuing as vigorously as possible, those who led the atrocities, gave orders and framed policy. Unless individuals are clearly identified as responsible for these crimes, collective hatreds will continue to fester. To pursue those who were chiefly responsible is not an ignoble way of drawing the line. There will be fewer trials, of course, but each one will serve as powerful symbol and example. As Mr Justice Goldstone has often said, there is no contradiction between this kind of carefully-drawn justice and genuine peace. By focusing principally on the brains behind the barbarism, Ifor's task is also greatly simplified. It is easier to detain a small number of readily identifiable war criminals than it is to sift through entire communities, especially in those cases where no one can truly be described as innocent. Guilt in Bosnia is commonplace; that is why Mr Justice Goldstone walks a tightrope.

CHERRY-PICKERS

The Bible, Shakespeare, Johnson, Churchill — and now Scott

The Scott report has been pigeonholed among the classics. However, this plump pigeon goes into the hole not for its prose, wit, readability, conversations or drama; but for its chameleon quotability. The report on arms exports to Iraq is a pond in which ministerial goldfish glimmer and Opposition piranha go feeding frenzy. From it enemies can also pluck the stoes of condemnation of this same Government as secretive, incospicuous, sophistical and economical with the *actualité* as well as the truth.

Selective quotation is a facility afforded by big books, especially one that labours to guard its spine against politicians. The Devil is famous not only for having the best tunes, but also for being able to quote scripture for his own soundbites. Shakespeare is claimed as a supporter by both the hard Right and romantic Left. And prescriptive pedants as well as descriptive permissives can find passages to prop up their prejudices in the works and words of Dr Johnson. Churchill is a quotation dictionary of textual encouragement for all hobbyhorses in the Tory stables. Sir Richard Scott would not claim to be on a level with the psalmist and other such giants, whose varied genius made them all things to all men. But his latest summing-up includes sticks and carrots for all.

For political cherry-pickers have now systematically taken up selective quotation, which used to be the art of theatre managers. Even the rudest notice can be made to look enthusiastic by omissions and the judicious use of triple dots. "Spectacular... (Daily

Beast)" may have started life on the critic's screen as: "This show is a spectacular flop." Unsurprisingly, only the first of James Thurber's two-sentence review — "It had only one fault. It was kind of lousy." — was chosen to advertise the play.

Political cherry-picking is the rhetorical equivalent of the grammatical figure of synecdoche, in which a part is taken out to stand for the whole. But in nautical grammar a fleet of 50 sail at least did have sails, and a team of England caps consists of the players, whether or not they are wearing their caps. But selective quotation and marginal misquotation from Scott have produced confusion rather than grammatical shorthand. On the one quote, ministers did not change the guidelines on arms exports, on the other quote, they were agreeing on a change of policy. The Attorney-General genuinely believed that he was personally, as opposed to constitutionally, blameless. However he was personally at fault. His advice about PII certificates appears correct as well as a fundamental misconception. Ministers did not deliberately mislead Parliament at the same time as there was a deliberate failure to inform Parliament.

So the Scott report is a book to take to the desert island along with the Bible and Shakespeare. For it will provide a quote for every season and taste. Since it perversely avoids coming to any particular conclusion, it is one of those books for which the reader can make up an ending to suit him. And, if the worst comes to the worst, the report is big and turgid enough to build a raft with — or at the least to frighten away the cannibals.

KEEP SMOKE ALIVE

Irish mist preserves the cigars in the woodpile

Ireland bears as many blessings as curses but the climate that makes the island emerald has, until now, been accounted one of its many drawbacks. The dampness and drizzle that blight potato crops and eat away at the fabric of Ascendancy homes have only contributed to the twilit melancholy of the Gael. But out of Hibernia's uttermost West comes proof that precipitation can be providential.

The damp in a Co Sligo country house has preserved a stock of fine Havana cigars in a smokeable state for 132 years. Leaves that would have lost their savour and grown stale if left in a draughty corner of an English home or Scottish castle have kept their aromatic oils, despite being mistaken for kidlings, thanks to the wet winds from the Atlantic that batter Connacht. Cigar aficionados know the great coronas must be kept cool and moist if they are to maintain their subtle allure. That these neglected torpedoes were sustained through civil war, partition and punitive taxation by heavenly humidity is a reminder, as if we needed one, that like all great men and some great women, God is a cigar-smoker.

The cigar has suffered, unfairly, by association with the plutocrat. The unacceptable face of capitalism has always had a top hat on its head and a stooge stuck between its lips. Certainly those who have acquired wisdom as well as wealth have known there are few better investments than the moments spent with a Montecristo. From Winston Churchill to Wyatt of Wexford those who affect an aristocratic tilt to their oryzae have done so with Havana in hand.

It can contribute to an air of arrogance and opponents may have wanted to give these grandees a punch in the mouth. But they probably already had one there.

Despite its popularity with the men of the Right, a good corona is as much an argument for socialism as a capitalist tool. Che and Castro were high-profile puffers and the finest cigar in the world. Cuba's Cohiba, is the product of Marxist central planning. Groucho may have popularised them but without Karl the cigar would never have reached its most sublime.

Men are seldom so innocently employed as when putting a panama to their lips. Tobacco has been a peace-maker since the first pipe was passed from Iroquois chief to Pilgrim father and even now it is impossible to muster the aggression needed for any argument while soothed by a subtle Romeo y Julieta. As Churchill himself almost said, puff-puff is better than rough stuff.

The aroma of a great cigar on man is more attractive than any cologne but female enjoyment should not be restricted to the initial rolling of the leaves on little thumbs or the appreciation of the intoxicating odour. The fastest-growing market for cigars stateside is among young women. There are signs the taste is spreading here. Bacall may have enticed with a smouldering cigarette, but Sharon Stone and Cindy Crawford now inspire respect with an assertive robusto jammed between bee-stung lips. After all, with barriers of taste breaking down between the sexes, women are still women; but why leave cigars to the blokes?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Duty, integrity and accountability, as viewed by Scott

From the Provost of The Queen's College, Oxford

Sir, At least the Scott inquiry (reports and leading article, February 16) has helped to dispel the widespread misunderstanding of our doctrine of ministerial responsibility.

It is an essential feature of that doctrine that the Government has an unchanging policy of giving the fullest information to Parliament. But, of course, one must distinguish between the policy itself, the application of the policy, the guidelines for its application, the interpretation of the guidelines, and relaxation of, or possible changes of emphasis within, the guidelines.

Circumstances often make it necessary for there to be some degree of relaxation or change of emphasis within the guidelines for the interpretation of evidence in the Matrix Churchill prosecution. One of the defending counsel in the case, Mr Gilbert Gray, QC, described Mr Moses's conduct of the manner as "the embodiment of fairness" (report, March 24, 1994).

2. The trial judge, Judge Smedley, specifically decided that the immunity had been properly claimed by the ministers concerned.

3. The judge carried out the "balancing exercise" and duly ordered disclosure of most, though not all, of the material and the trial proceeded.

4. Other defending counsel in the case have also publicly refuted any suggestion of unfairness, lack of integrity or abuse on the part of the Attorney-General or the prosecuting authorities.

Two of them, Mr James Hunt, QC, and Mr Michael Stokes, stated in a letter which you published on November 13, 1992, that "there was no question of anyone attempting to suppress evidence".

There was no "gagging order". The Matrix Churchill prosecution was abandoned not because of any suppression of the truth but because Mr Alan Clark, the former Defence Minister, changed his evidence. To say otherwise would be to distort the "actuality" with which Mr Clark himself was so "economical".

Yours faithfully,

GEOFFREY MARSHALL,

The Queen's College, Oxford.

February 16.

From Mr Robert Seabrook, QC, others

Sir, Whatever the wider issues explored in Sir Richard Scott's inquiry, the notion, which has been assiduously peddled in some quarters during the past three years, that the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, was engaged in a deliberate suppression of evidence in the Matrix Churchill prosecution was always unsustainable. It was a shoddy and unwarranted slur on his integrity.

It is our collective understanding and experience that at the time of the Matrix Churchill trial a minister was, as a matter of law, under a duty to disclose documents of a certain recognised class in which there was an established *prima facie* public interest in non-disclosure. The documents would then be referred to the trial judge, who would carry out a

Endangered snails

From Dr Norman Moore and others

Sir, We note that the endangered species of small *Vertigo moulensis*, has been recorded by English Nature at 19 locations along the rivers Kennet and Lambourn in Berkshire (News in brief, February 15). The species has already been reported at the Rack Marsh Nature Reserve, an island in the Lambourn that will be irreparably damaged by the embankments of the proposed Newbury bypass.

Last December the Government's biodiversity steering group placed *Vertigo moulensis* on a list of 116 endangered species that should receive priority conservation efforts. Furthermore, the habitat is already under consideration by English Nature as a special area of conservation under the EU habitats directive.

Because no comprehensive environmental impact assessment has been carried out, the international conservation importance of habitats along the bypass route and the damage they would be subjected to from the new road are not known.

It is therefore vital that the Government suspend all works along the bypass route and delay the signing of the construction contract until a thorough and independent environmental impact assessment has been effected.

Yours etc.

N. W. MOORE

(Chief Scientific Officer,

Nature Conservancy Council, 1974-83).

ALASTAIR FITTER

(Department of Biology,

University of York.

BRIAN MOSS

(Department of Environmental and Biological Studies, University of Liverpool).

PHILIP WEBER

(Chair, Scientists for Global Responsibility,

University of York.

Department of Biology,

PO Box No 373, York.

February 16.

From Mr Peter Doyle

Sir, A man is standing trial for the murder of his girlfriend. It is a notorious case. To assist his detection and arrest, his picture was in most newspapers today, and on the television too.

As the jury is told who he is and what he is alleged to have done, they say to themselves, "Ah! This is the man we read about, who was hunted high and low". They also remind themselves that he has a previous conviction for rape. How do they know? They opened their newspapers today and read about it.

If Victor Farrant is found, arrested, charged and committed for trial, how does the judge's task of ensuring a fair trial if those who try him already know that he is a rapist?

Yours faithfully,
PETER DOYLE,
9-12 Bell Yard, WC2
February 14.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

"balancing exercise" to determine whether the interests of justice in the particular case nevertheless required disclosure.

Anyone having doubts as to whether the recognised procedures were fairly and properly followed in the Matrix Churchill case should be reminded of the following:

1. Prosecuting counsel, Mr Alan Moses, QC, duly placed the material and the ministers' certificates before the court in accordance with his instructions and the well-established procedures. One of the defending counsel in the case, Mr Gilbert Gray, QC, described Mr Moses's conduct of the manner as "the embodiment of fairness" (report, March 24, 1994).

2. The trial judge, Judge Smedley, specifically decided that the immunity had been properly claimed by the ministers concerned.

3. The judge carried out the "balancing exercise" and duly ordered disclosure of most, though not all, of the material and the trial proceeded.

4. Other defending counsel in the case have also publicly refuted any suggestion of unfairness, lack of integrity or abuse on the part of the Attorney-General or the prosecuting authorities.

5. The judge carried out the "balancing exercise" and duly ordered disclosure of most, though not all, of the material and the trial proceeded.

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OBITUARIES

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN

Sir George Trevelyan, teacher and New Age thinker, died on February 7 aged 89. He was born on November 5, 1906.

AN ELDER statesman of the New Age movement, Sir George Trevelyan saw the mission of his later years as an "exploration into God". From the moment when in 1942 he first tagged along to a lecture given by one of Rudolph Steiner's students — "I have no doubt", he later said, "that this event in my life was staged by higher destiny, and that the time was ripe for a leap in consciousness" — he began to work towards the promotion of an alternative spirituality.

Trevelyan spoke with inspiration of the planet Earth as "a living being in a living universe... a universe which is a great ocean of life and thought". Alongside such ideas as communal living and organic farming, he explored beliefs in angels and the purified vision of the unicorn, the power of ley lines, and the calming effects of crystals. In 1971 he set up the Wrekin Trust to promote spiritual knowledge and education, and take the New Age message to the world. Annually he would convene a "Round Table" conference — appropriate perhaps for a man whose family coat of arms linked him to Sir Trevilian, one of King Arthur's legendary knights — for the leaders of healing centres and holistic organisations.

He was much involved in the Padharn Foundation in Moray, an international experiment in community living, and with the Gaiakeeper and Open Gate trusts for the reawakening of pilgrimages to sacred places. In 1982 he was awarded the "alternative Nobel Prize" the Right Livelihood award, for his work towards "healing the planet".

During his younger years, however, Trevelyan had been an agnostic committed to the rational, analytical view that man is a mere collocation of atoms — a chance happening in a random universe. Perhaps it is hard to believe that someone who embodied so many spiritual aspirations could have held on to such a materialist view for so long, but this view was deeply entrenched in his family. His uncle, the historian George Macaulay Trevelyan, was an aggressive agnostic, as was his father, an MP who served in two Labour Cabinets.

Trevelyan's appreciation of the na-



ral world, however, was rooted in his youth. He spent his childhood divided between London and his father's estate in Northumberland where he passed long days roaming wild on the moors, and at school in Sidcup in the Mendip Hills he found a passion for exploring caves.

At Trinity College, Cambridge, where Trevelyan read history, he succeeded his father as Master of the Lake Hunt; otherwise known as the Trevelyan Man Hunt — an unorthodox chase over the Lakeland fells in pursuit of a human hare — which had been begun in 1898 by his historian uncle together with George Winthrop Young. Though in later years Trevelyan was painfully crippled by arthritis, he could still look back with pride on his 42-year association with this hunt and the days when he could outrun the whole pack downhill.

Trevelyan first considered a career in architecture but turned to crafts-

manship instead. He was apprenticed for two years in a furniture workshop at Chalford in Gloucestershire under the direction of Peter Waals who worked in a tradition inspired by William Morris. While there he made some fine pieces of furniture, including the bed he was to sleep in for the rest of his life, and in old age he would run his hand and eye lovingly over the lines and chambers of furniture which he had designed and collected.

Following this period of craftsmanship, Trevelyan threw himself into a three-year training course with F. Matthias Alexander whom he had met at Cambridge. He was captivated by the vision of wholeness which animated Alexander's technique and taught these methods himself for a while before coming into contact with another charismatic figure Kurt Hahn, the founder of Gordonstoun School.

Trevelyan went to Gordonstoun to teach history, literature, woodwork

and outdoor pursuits. While there, he began to think about the possible use of England's great country houses as centres of adult education, with his mind on such a scheme for Wallington, the Trevelyan family home in Northumberland. This idea stayed with him throughout the war, which he spent as a captain in the Rifle Brigade, based in Scotland and occupied in training the Home Guard. After the war he worked in the art department of the Army College at Dalkeith to equip himself with skills in adult education.

Trevelyan's hopes of using Wallington as a college were dashed when his father made a settlement whereby the estate would pass to the National Trust on his death. But in 1947 Trevelyan was appointed principal of the newly-created Shropshire Adult College at Attingham Park. During his 24 years there he developed a wide programme of activities placing great emphasis upon creative activity and upon finding within each subject the integrating ideas which would relate it to a wider context. He attracted leading speakers, arranged concerts and took an active part in almost every course himself whether it was "Historic Houses of Britain", "Finding the Inner Teacher", or "Death and Becoming".

Throughout this time Trevelyan had been developing his interest in spiritual matters. Influenced by the thought of Rudolph Steiner, he invited speakers of the Anthroposophical Society to Attingham. Although this caused some tremors in the Shropshire County Council, the courses on "Frontiers of Reality" or "Spiritual Awakening" drew large and enthusiastic audiences among which were some of the future leaders of the New Age movement.

Retiring from Attingham in 1971, Trevelyan determined to build on these New Age contacts by setting up the Wrekin Trust — named after the hill near Attingham. The last 15 years of his active life were spent on a ceaseless round of travel and New Age gatherings. He published books, tapes and videos outlining his beliefs, drawing widely on his quite extraordinary knowledge of poetry in his efforts to expand the consciousness of his listeners.

George Trevelyan married Helen Lindsay-Smith, then a teacher at Gordonstoun, in 1942. She died in 1993. He is survived by their daughter.

GEOFF GALWEY

Geoff Galwey, trainer of naval beach reconnaissance parties during the Second World War, died on January 17 aged 83. He was born on May 1, 1912.

AS A young seaman in the Royal Navy, Geoff Galwey had contracted rheumatic fever and was invalided out of the service. Disregarding medical orders, however, Galwey found himself a post as a trainer of beach landing parties, one of Mountbatten's handpicked team of Combined Operations Pilotage Parties (COPP). In this capacity he contributed an immense amount to the success of naval reconnaissance operations during the war.

Born in India, Geoffrey Valentine Galwey joined the Royal Navy at Dartmouth at the age of 13. But in 1930 he was invalided out of the Navy. Back in civilian life, he got a job selling advertising space on the *Hardware Trade Journal* and in 1935 joined Lovell and Rupert Curtis, a Fleet Street advertising agency, later becoming a director.

With war threatening in 1938, he enlisted in the London River Auxiliary Fire Service.

Rejected by the RNVR on medical grounds at the start of the war, he joined the crew of A. P. Herbert's *Water Gipsy*, based on the Thames. Realising that *Water Gipsy* was unfit to cross the Channel to Dunkirk, Galwey and two fellow crew members applied to the Admiralty for another boat and set off down the Thames. But the boat was turned back at the Nore as being unsatisfactory and Dunkirk was over before they could get across.

By 1941 Galwey was commissioned into the RNVR, but was officially certified by an Admiralty medical board as fit for "home, shore and harbour services only". But after acting as a flag lieutenant in Orkney, he was recommended to Mountbatten and was soon swimming in the cold waters of Scotland, training beach landing parties for COPP. Their job was to explore enemy-held beaches selected for invasion to see if they were mine-free, if the shingle could support the weight of tanks, and if there were proper exits from the beach.

In January 1943 Galwey was instructed to find and equip a training base for COPP, and he requisitioned the Hayling Island Sailing Clubhouse, ideally situated on its isolated peninsula in Chichester Harbour.

Galwey turned his creative

skills to constant innovations for these stealthy operations. Six months before D-Day at dead of night on New Year's Eve 1943, swimmers from tiny landing craft reconnoitred the Normandy beaches. In biting winds, they and the boat crews became incapacitated by seasickness and expo-

sure, nearly losing their equipment which might have compromised the entire Allied invasion plans. That they all returned with their gear was credited largely to Galwey.

On D-Day itself, two X-craft (midget submarines), manned by Galwey-trained men, were lying submerged off the selected invasion beaches ready to surface at dawn and guide the assault craft in. When the invasion was postponed for 24 hours because of a bad weather forecast the crews of the X-craft could have run out of air, been forced to surface and given the element of surprise away, but Galwey had filled the submarines' inflatable ditches with oxygen instead of the usual carbon dioxide, enabling the men to refresh their air supply and survive.

Galwey himself came over on a motor launch to help navigate and rendezvous with one of the X-craft. Top-secret at the time, the X-craft played a crucial role in guiding in the armada of assault craft in the greatest seaborne invasion in history. The Americans declined the Navy's offer of X-craft for their beaches as being too risky and suffered near-crippling losses when the tide carried their boats towards the most heavily defended area instead of the beach chosen.

In 1945 Galwey returned to Lovell and Rupert Curtis, retiring in 1977. He also wrote three novels: *Murder on Leave* (1947), *The Lift and the Drop* (1948) and *Full Fathom Five* (1951), and one play, *Bubel* (1970), which successfully toured in Canada.

In 1978 he retired happily to the coast of Suffolk. He is survived by his second wife, Joan, a daughter from his first marriage, and a son from the second.

SHAMUS CULHANE

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY



Shamus Culhane, animator and author, died in New York City on February 2 aged 87. He was born in Ware, Massachusetts, on November 12, 1908.

WALT Disney was not at all sure about employing Shamus Culhane when the young man applied for a job in 1935. Culhane was a competent animator, but he had spent ten years learning his skills in the mass-production cartoon factories of the East Coast, working for the pioneers J. R. Bray and Max Fleischer on such characters as Betty Boop. Disney, who at that time was trying to instil a sense of professionalism into his animators, might have destroyed Culhane's skill and sense of subtlety.

Later he played a succession of predictable roles in such classic comedies as *The Beau Strategem*, *The Rivals*, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, *The Admirable Crichton* and *Dandy Dick*, as well as more modern plays like *Hadrian VII* and *Habes Corpus*. She became the recognised expert in giving nice big performances in nice little parts. If she ever did wonder where else her career might have gone if she had not been placed so early in such a comfortable niche, she never let on.

She married Ivan Pinfield and had one son; the marriage was later dissolved.

described it as the "essence of dog".

Culhane admired Disney's quest for perfection, though he had reservations about his commercialism, but he was too pugnacious and forthright a character to be tied for long to any one master.

At the age of 78 Culhane turned to writing. He had already produced numerous screenplays for animated films; now he published an autobiography, *Talking Animals and Other People*, an unsparing view of the often squalid world of the animated film industry — an industry subject to brutal internal politics and harsh labour relations. Culhane's depictions of some of those he met were hardly flattering: "pompous pipsqueak" and "humanoid aberration" were just two of his more choice descriptions.

But Culhane's overall outlook was optimistic: "I was a link with the past," he wrote, "before sound, colour or tape. I had been permitted to live long enough to see and use the greatest tools for artists that were ever invented. I am convinced that computer animation will produce beautiful works of art — beautiful beyond our most fantastic dreams."

In 1988 Culhane published a well-received textbook on his art, *Animation from Script to Screen*.

Twice married, he is survived by Juana, his wife of 36 years, and by two sons.

MARGARET COURTEENAY

Margaret Courtenay, actress, died on February 15 aged 72. She was born on November 14, 1923.



AN ACTRESS whose evident talents would permit her to range from Lady Bracknell to a midget in *Rat-a-Tat* — curiously, she seems never to have played to Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Margaret Courtenay was clearly strong on authority. Whatever stage she was on, even in a relatively small role, she was certain to dominate it.

This was partly because of her statuesque presence and her reverberant voice, guaranteed to reach the back of any dress circle without the aid of a microphone. But perhaps even more it was the projection of her own personality. One look at her, and you knew immediately who was in charge. Since words like "battleaxe" and "harridan" were likely to be evoked by virtually any role she played, it was not unexpected that she specialised almost exclusively in comedy.

She was every man's stereotypical nightmare mother-in-law, straight out of a Donald McGill postcard or an Aldwych farce. But she could, and did, also play a variety of Shakespearean characters who might boss but did not necessarily intimidate, like Mistress Quickly in *Henry V* or Juliet's Nurse, and she could be quietly chilling when

she wanted to be, as in a memorable appearance as Miss Rafton-Bell in Rathigan's *Separate Tables*. A rather similar quality came out when she played Lady Hayling in a revival of Coward's *Relative Values* in 1993, as the epitome of icy superiority.

In her personal relations she was not so unlike her stage persona: She knew what she wanted and was more than ready to stand up for her right to get it. She was one of those people who proverbially do

not suffer fools gladly. However, she was also disarmingly able to see the joke of her own bossy ways, and had a nice line of her own in wry humour.

And, if had to be admitted, when she stood out fiercely for something to be done or done differently or not done at all in the theatre, she generally knew what she was talking about. She was a great scener-stealer, but in general not unkindly so: her natural exuberance on stage would carry

her away in certain respects she would have been as good casting for the title role in the musical *Mama* as for Vera Charles, whom nevertheless she played to the manner born, but infrequently to the detriment of the production as a whole. And sometimes, it must be admitted, she appeared in shows which deservedly needed her aid.

She had a remarkably long career, primarily in the theatre, though she also appeared from time to time on the large and the small screen. She was born in Cardiff, child of a travelling salesman specializing in farm equipment and a mother who was an enthusiastic amateur actress. It was through the mother that she came to make her first appearance on stage, at a Cardiff Little Theatre production of *The Trojan Women*.

She always seemed naturally destined for an acting career, and started on radio while she was still at grammar school, before going on as a matter of course to study at LAMDA. She made her way from there to the traditional route of seaside rep at Beacham's Court, a couple of seasons with the Memorial Theatre Company (as it was then) at Stratford, and then to London with the Old Vic, for whom she played, most notably, *Hippolyta* in an ambitious production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which toured North America.

During her next three seasons at the Old Vic she played, while in her early thirties, such roles as Gertrude, Goneril and Lady Capulet, having clearly established the image which was to stay with her for the rest of her professional life. She was, even then, much more versatile than this might lead one to suppose. She was able, for instance, to appear in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Glyndebourne in 1961, and her strong musical sense and powerful singing voice subsequently stood her in good stead in several musicals, including *Showboat*, *Follies* and *42nd Street*.

Nor would she have seemed, on the face of it, obvious casting for contemporary plays as various as *Alife*, *Genet's The Maids* and *The Killing of Sister George*. Indeed, though Albee's *Martha in Virginia Woolf* is the modern teratoma of all modern teratoma, the sexual dimension of the role, definitively embodied by Elizabeth Taylor in the film version, did not seem to fit her skills at all. Yet those who saw her playing the character at the Bristol Old Vic were universally impressed.

Later she played a succession of predictable roles in such classic comedies as *The Beau Strategem*, *The Rivals*, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, *The Admirable Crichton* and *Dandy Dick*, as well as more modern plays like *Hadrian VII* and *Habes Corpus*. She became the recognised expert in giving nice big performances in nice little parts. If she ever did wonder where else her career might have gone if she had not been placed so early in such a comfortable niche, she never let on.

She married Ivan Pinfield and had one son; the marriage was later dissolved.

DEMONSTRATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED

Yesterday afternoon three or four thousand of the unemployed of London held a demonstration on the Embankment, near Cleopatra's Needle, and afterwards marched to Westminster, carrying banners on which were inscribed "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity", "Vox populi vox dei" and other mottoes. From Whitehall a large number of the crowd passed into Downing Street, near the Premier's residence, where a Cabinet meeting was being held at the time; but the request of the police, of whom an extra force were in attendance, the crowd moved round to King's Street, where they were addressed in somewhat inflammatory terms by some of their leaders, who were red badges. One speaker clung to the top of a lamp-post, and others harangued the crowd; another spoke from a tall lorry.

Meeting in the absence of Sir Charles Dilke, who was in the Cabinet meeting, Mr. G. W. Russell, Parliamentary secretary of the Local Government Board, received a small delegation of the leaders. They urged that, in view of the widespread destitution owing to the large number of unemployed, the Board should insist upon local authorities carrying out public work of a necessary and useful kind in their respective districts, so as to afford some employment to those who were starving in enforced idleness; and that the hours of work on railways, at arsenals, docks, docks, and other public establishments should be reduced in order that work might be

were, on the other hand, under the management of departments over which the Local Government Board had no control.

A correspondent writes:—At the door of the Local Government Board offices a small detachment of the A Division of police were stationed under the immediate direction of Superintendent German and Inspector Beard, and the officers had considerable difficulty in preventing an invasion of the building. It was a quarter past 3 when the deputation was admitted, and during the interview, which lasted 1 hour and 20 minutes, the crowd outside showed symptoms of turbulence which the police had great difficulty in keeping in check. On several occasions there was an ugly rush made to force an entrance into the Local Government offices, but without success. For a white, order was maintained by a speech from one of the leaders of the demonstration, who mounted on a lassoo and, counseled the crowd to keep quiet. After 15 minutes the other leaders were in a somewhat inflammatory character, and when he mentioned that the Princess Beatrice was about to be married to a German pauper, who, he said, was going to receive £20,000 a year of Englishmen's money, there were loud shouts of "Down with Royalty".

Another orator made a second appeal for order, but by this time the crowd began to be impatient, and an attempt was made to break down a wooden fence. . . . The police did not draw their truncheons: the crowd ran away on seeing the determination of the police to suppress disorder.

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TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 277 of the TRUSTEE ACT 1925 that any person interested in the ESTATE of Mary E. Trevelyan, deceased, of 14 Tree Avenue, West Drayton, Middlesex, died on 22nd December 1995 and that the Estate of the above-named deceased is now out of court and descriptions are out below. No application has been made by any person to administer the estate. The estate is worth £10,000.00 and is situated in New Malden, Surrey. Notice of the death of the above-named deceased was given to the Probate Registry on 18th April 1995.

ALDO ATTILIO FALLA, Esq., of 24 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1 1JZ, solicitor, is the sole trustee of the above-named deceased.

A sprinkling of pixel dust

A particularly hilarious television discussion from the 1950s, which I reproduce from memory alone alas, has a panel of aged worthies discussing the arrival of rock and roll.

All agree that the music is unpleasant and pointless. One, a bishop as I remember, draws his clerical vestments tightly around him and opines, baffled: "I have never rock-and-rolled; indeed, I have never felt the need to rock-and-roll."

I have always felt rather the same about the Internet. I know this puts me on the same side of the generational divide as that bishop. For brothel-creeped teddy boys then tearing up cinema seats across the land, read cyberpunks today. I have never surfed the Internet; indeed, I have never felt the need to surf the Internet.

But I am interested in those computer stocks that burst forth like novas once in a while, showering windfalls on investors. You know the sort of thing,

even if you, like I, can never quite visualise what it is that these wondrous devices actually do:

"InterFace Technologies of Luton has signed a development deal with MegaCyberCorp to allow its ProtoX image-slicers to be used on service stations on the InterWeb. The image-slicers will allow the user to access interstitial nodes..."

By the time you have read thus far into the announcement, the share price is well into the troposphere. It is too late; the smart money is on board, the bell has rung, the bus is away from the kerb. You are left with a vague feeling that if you had just understood it all quickly enough, you might be on the top deck too.

There are three things you should know. The smart money, too, cannot tell an image-slicer from a bacon-slicer. The smart money saw the deal, or one like it, coming months ago and bought in not for the image-slicers but because the stock is blessed with that lucky sprinkling of pixel dust.

These are one-offs. If the

Today's scramble for shares is just the pay-off.

We had another of these novas this week. Something called Superscape, maker of virtual reality machines whose profits, so far, have also been limited to virtual reality, linked with IBM.

The second point is that there are an awful lot of flakes, and downright frauds, out there.

Sexy sectors like computers or biotech draw any number of duds into their slipstream. It is not so many years since a small chemicals company, sensing an advantage to be gained from the Aids scare, announced a new product that killed the HIV virus on any surface on contact. It was selling self.

The third is that we plucky Brits are not going to do it alone. Superscape follows a familiar road. Last year's big success stories in high-tech stocks, like Unipalm, Azlan and MAID, came after deals struck across the Atlantic.

These are one-offs. If the



MARTIN WALLER

dramatic, and found around the margins. The challenge is to spot those businesses that will find ways of doing so.

The two difficulties with the InterNet are extracting revenues from those cruising in cyberspace and persuading them to stay still long enough to look at advertising. It is tempting to see the net as analogous to a cable TV network. Those small numbers currently on line are technofreaks, there because they want to be. The services out there, I suggest, are not yet the most important thing.

So the trick would appear to be to hook in non-users like me and, perhaps, by boosting the services available, in the same way that a cable company bolts together a package of TV channels until this is tempting enough to persuade the potential viewer to open the front door.

But the experts, perhaps keen to retain the mystique, say that the Net will never be a mass-market phenomenon. It is not a

question of shoving product down the consumer's throat. Instead, the "viewer" chooses to come to you because he or she is aware of, and wants, your service.

There are currently five million "host sites" on the Net, places in cyberspace where you can go to get something, anything. Consider the problems of a TV station competing with 4,999,999 other channels.

Instead, the experts are excited by so-called "hybrid" media opportunities. A recent study from Andrea Kirkby at Daiwa talks of a symbiotic relationship between the World-wide Web and existing advertising media".

There are specialist magazines that cross over onto the Net, allowing readers to discuss their little fixations there — EMAP is well advanced in this area.

Several bookstores have tested a system of ordering next down the line and printing in the store, so avoiding the need to tie up shelf space with actual books. So much for the armies of Babbage

and Turing triumphing over those of Gutenberg and Caxton.

One of the most interesting of the hybrid media is being developed by Dorling Kindersley.

Producers of some of the best encyclopaedias, now in bookstores, the publisher also sells these in CD-Rom form. CD-Roms are set to become the worldwide staple for information storage in virtually every medium except the printed word.

The encyclopaedias are wonderful, and particularly suited to young and inquiring minds.

But Dorling Kindersley also

has plans to use its CD-Rom products to pull those minds onto the InterNet. Not only can the encyclopaedia be regularly updated — consider the changes to the entry on Yugoslavia over the past five years — but the CD-Rom will also give access to the Net, and to other online "clubs" of fellow young enthusiasts.

The bishop and I might recoil, appalled. But I think the Jesuits, at least, would have approved.

EFM calls for cash to acquire Dunedin

BY PATRICIA TEHAN
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

EDINBURGH Fund Managers has confirmed its plans to buy Dunedin, the investment manager, from Bank of Scotland and other shareholders in a deal worth £83.25 million. The acquisition will double the size of EFM's funds under management to £8.2 billion.

The deal will be part-funded by the proceeds of a placing and open offer to raise £75 million after expenses. Bank of Scotland, which holds 50.5 per cent of the shares, will net a capital gain of £34 million.

Shareholders, including the Edinburgh Investment Trust, with 28.9 per cent, and three Dunedin trusts, will also benefit from a pre-completion dividend of £8 million.

The enlarged EFM will have 8 per cent of the UK investment trust market. Significant cost savings should be derived from the amalgamation of the two groups.

EFM also published its results for the year to January 31 yesterday, showing pre-tax profits reduced to £12.8 million from £13.7 million after the sale of its private client fund management business. The dividend is 1p higher at 24p, with a final 17p due May 20.

Lloyds fight intensifies as UniChem raises bid

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE BATTLE for Lloyds Chemists intensified yesterday with UniChem increasing its offer to £634 million and Gehe, the German company, widely expected to up its rival bid. The Lloyds board was holding a meeting last night and considering its response to the UniChem move.

Lloyd's Chemists has 900 retail outlets around the country. UniChem and Gehe each control about a third of the drugs wholesale market. Whichever company wins the bid battle will become Britain's second largest chemist chain behind Boots.

UniChem said yesterday's offer was final and Jeffery Harris, the chairman, denied suggestions from the Gehe camp that its cash and share offer would leave it financially stretched. "I resent that," Mr Harris said. "We don't feel at all stretched, we have slightly

upped the cash element and at very good interest rates." He said his company had found "substantial support from Lloyds' shareholders."

Gehe's £84 million offer, made last week and recommended by the Lloyds board, was all in cash and the company's advisers yesterday said they thought this still gave Gehe a considerable advantage of a much lower cost of capital. They said they were "pursuing this [bid] with determination".

Allen Lloyd, chairman and founder of Lloyds Chemists, stands to be happy whoever wins. He has watched his 7.5 per cent shareholding rise in value to £47.5 million.

UniChem's bid comprises 926p in cash and 16 new UniChem shares for every ten Lloyds shares, valuing Lloyds at 488.5p a share. Its shares surged yesterday by 23p to 493p, while UniChem's rose 8.5p to 247.5p. Repayment of a tax credit for a special dividend of 40p takes the implied gross value of the revised offer to £646 million. UniChem's initial agreed offer for Lloyds valued it at £528 million.

In a separate development yesterday, the European Commission said it was starting a preliminary inquiry into Gehe's plans to take over Lloyds Chemists.

Analysts said that both companies were in some danger of overreaching themselves in their bids for Lloyds, but said that they were clearly worried about being left in a poor third in the chemist market if they lost. Mr Harris said that if UniChem were to lose, the company would continue to grow by acquiring some of the 10,000 remaining independent chemists shops.



Peter Birse, right, and Martin Buddon, finance director

Birse in profit

BY MARTIN BARROW

BIRSE GROUP, the construction company, has returned to profit after four years of losses. In the six months to October 31, it earned £340,000 before tax, up from a £680,000 loss in the first half of the previous year.

Peter Birse, the chairman, said: "It is very encouraging to see our principal business in construction making such satisfactory progress in these difficult times as it is the success of that business which will underwrite the

future prosperity of the group."

Birse left private housebuilding in 1995. Mr Birse said: "I look to the future with more optimism than I have been able to do for some time."

Turnover rose by 31 per cent to £202 million, from £154 million, yielding operating profit of £1.33 million, against just £270,000 previously.

Birse wants to cancel the share premium account to permit resumption of dividends.

The shares rose 5p. to 17.5p.

Accountant 'demanded meeting with Nadir'

BY JON ASHWORTH

A SENIOR accountant made a frantic dash across London to demand a meeting with Asil Nadir on suspicions that he had been supplied with incorrect financial information, the Central Criminal Court was told yesterday.

Philip Pretejohn, a partner in Rawlinson and Hunter, warned him to explain an apparent link between two offshore companies and Nadir family interests — an anomaly that gave rise to "considerable concern".

Mr Nadir was unavailable, and the meeting did not take place until some days later.

Mr Pretejohn had initially demanded an answer from Elizabeth Forsyth, who had been recruited from Citibank as Mr Nadir's "right-hand woman" on private family matters. Her response was one of "considerable surprise", and she insisted it "must be a mistake" to talk of a link with the companies, Gateway Investments and Riverbridge Investments. She continued to express her surprise on the journey to Polly Peck International's head office in Berkeley Square, London.

Mrs Forsyth, 59, former chairman of South Audley Management, denies two counts of handling £400,000 in allegedly stolen funds during a week in October 1989.

Mr Pretejohn, giving evidence on the fourth day of the trial, outlined a tax structure known as the South Audley Settlement that was created to limit Mr Nadir's liability for capital gains tax. Mrs Forsyth had approached his firm in June 1987 seeking help in setting up a suitable scheme.

Mr Pretejohn told of his need to frequently remind Mrs Forsyth not to interfere with the running of various offshore trusts and companies.

The court heard of conversations with Jason Davies, a stockbroking friend of Mr Nadir's son, who had run up personal debts of up to £350,000 in the 1987 stock market crash. Mr Nadir had given him a job at South Audley Management.

The trial continues on Monday.

Judge is named for Kevin Maxwell trial

THE judge at the next trial of Kevin Maxwell — due to start at the end of the year — is to be Mr Justice Buckley. He is expected to spend the next few months reading the intricacies of allegations arising from the collapse of the Maxwell empire, which have occupied lawyers for more than four years.

An experienced High Court judge, Mr Justice Buckley, 56, is no stranger to complex cases involving allegations of corporate crime. He presided in the 1992 trial of executives accused of corruption in relation to British Rail engineering contracts. At the end of the prosecution case, he directed the jury to return not guilty verdicts. Mr Justice Buckley takes over the Maxwell case from Lord Justice Phillips, now a Court of Appeal judge, who has been involved with it since 1993 and has impressed both prosecution and defence lawyers with his mastery of the issues. He introduced state-of-the-art computer aids into the first trial — which ended in Kevin and Ian Maxwell's acquittal.

Trade Indemnity rises

TRADE INDEMNITY GROUP, the credit insurer being acquired by Compagnie Financière SFAC, of France, for £177.5 million, has reported a sharp recovery in pre-tax profits to £2.25 million in 1995, from £5 million the previous year. The company said that although the 1989 to 1991 underwriting account led to underwriting losses, 1992 showed a return to profit for continuing operations and the closed 1993 account has continued the recovery. Earnings per share rose to 9.6p, from 2.2p. A previously declared second interim dividend of 1.4p is payable when the SFAC offer becomes unconditional.

Bank buys housebuilder

ROYAL Bank of Scotland is buying Charles Church, the heavily indebted Surrey housebuilder, for a nominal sum. Church owes banks a total of £405 million, including £14.5 million to Royal Bank. The ordinary share capital is being acquired for £130 million. The bank is paying an additional £700,000 for the preference shares and has agreed to take over the outstanding debts of the other banks for £12.8 million. In the year to August 31, 1995, Church made an operating profit of £4.1 million on turnover of £4.7 million.

Burmah sells retailers

BURMAH CASTROL is selling its Turkish and Chilean fuel retailing businesses for £64 million. The owner of the Castrol GTX motor oil brand sold its UK petrol stations in July, and is also in talks to sell its Swedish fuels business. Completion of these deals, including the UK petrol stations, will have generated £150 million for Burmah, which will be left with fuels businesses in Australia, Belgium and Ireland. The company intends to expand in the Turkish market through other distribution channels.

Tempus, page 50

Southern Water deal

SOUTHERN WATER, the privatised utility, is acquiring VCHL a vehicle contract hire and leasing company with operations in Surrey and Kent, for a maximum £13 million in cash and shares. VCHL, which had turnover of £8.7 million in the year to August 31, 1995, will be integrated with Topmark Vehicle Contracts. Southern Water's existing vehicle leasing company. The two founding directors of VCHL will continue to be involved with the business.

The trial continues on Monday.

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: CHRIS FARROW

Eastender inspired by spirit of Liverpool

Christine Buckley meets the Londoner ready to walk through a storm for the North's successful docklands reclamation project

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

The weather in Chris Farrow's office whisks through slight gaps in a window. From this and its neighbouring windows on the fourth floor of Liverpool's famous Royal Liver Building, he — and the two Liver birds that stand on top of the landmark — can look down on his workplace. For the chief executive of the Merseyside Development Corporation, his office view makes him master of most of what he surveys.

In more clement conditions it is a pleasant vista. But this day it is grim. Rain whips across the grey Irish Sea and the blustery wind brings an oil-rig service vessel into Liverpool Bay seeking shelter. It is returning from the first field off the west coast of England to produce oil. Hamilton Oil started to strip in the fuel late last year from the field, which lies just a little way out from the city.

The service vessel chugs slowly up the Mersey drawing level with the former shipbuilding yard that now bears the repainted name of Cammell Laird. Shipbuilding and one of Merseyside's former major employers has gone, but repair work is keeping some of the yard busy and now that the owner — Coastline Industries — has bought the famous name, the memory of a more prosperous past is kept alive.

To port, the busier passes Brunswick business park, a collection of small manufacturers operating from the reclaimed site of an old quay of the same name. Ahead of it lies a leisure park and housing on land reclaimed from dereliction to stage the city's massive garden festival in 1994.

Immediately ahead of the vessel is the Albert Docks, the luxury shopping and housing development where the vast car parks are sometimes forced to close because they are full. The complex is often held up as the epitome of dock development. It thrives while Tobacco Dock in east London lies forlorn and largely unoccupied.

The Albert Docks are where the Tate-Gallery sits its home in the North, which now attracts 800,000 visitors a year and has banished the scepticism that surrounded its opening. Rightly so, believes Farrow, given the appropriate links that Liverpool offers. "Tate was from Liverpool and it was in London Docklands that he and Lyle first came together."

The London Docklands connection is something Farrow shares. He is wearing a London Docklands tie to demonstrate his sympathy and solidarity with the bombed area that he helped to develop as operations director before moving to Liverpool four years ago.

Farrow, an Eastender, enthuses about the quality of life on Merseyside. He came North West at the behest of Sir Desmond

Pitcher, the forthright and expansive chairman of United Utilities, who also heads the Merseyside Development Corporation, which sprang into being in 1981 as part of the Government's urban regeneration drive. For the amiable and energetic Farrow, it was a journey into the unknown. "I'd never really been north of Watford before, in all seriousness, so I didn't know what to expect, but we're very settled here." His three children have started to develop slight Sensus lilt, he says, and he and his wife, who works for Liverpool Housing Action, have developed a different social circle.

"In London, the friends we had were in very similar positions to us, there wasn't a large amount of variety in the social circle. But here we have a far more varied social life and mix with a lot more people in industry. People aren't as pigeonholed," he says. Family life, as well as a jump in professional status, have been the benefits of a move North. "The schools are better and all you can afford a much better quality of life."

But they were unknown quantities when Farrow made the decision to uproot. Initially, he was attracted not only by the chance to run the show in Liverpool but also by Sir Desmond's passion for his locale. "He puts a lot of effort into the area. He was born in a council flat here and has never forgotten that. That sort of attitude is typical of many in Liverpool; there is a great desire to get things done. The spirit of the place is very strong."

Spirit is particularly evident in the port heartland of Merseyside. At the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, which runs the commercial port, a bitter dispute shows no signs of ending. Workers from the port, which has had its workforce shrunk from 4,000 to 400, have spent the past four months locked in unofficial dispute with the company over its sacking of 329 men who refused to cross a picket line. Last week, the men rejected an offer of about £25,000 per worker to settle the dispute and demanded their jobs back. Union officials are trying to whip up international support for a blockade of the port.

This week, the company revealed that it had lost £4 million up to the end of last year as a result of the dispute, when it turned in pre-tax profits of £31.7 million, down from the previous year's £33.6 million. Gordon Waddell, the chairman, sounded a note of gloom when he commented: "Further intransigence and action on their [the strikers'] part will only affect the reputation of the port of Liverpool, and be to the detriment of Merseyside as a whole."

Indeed, the strike is bad news, not only for the men who complain that the speed with which their jobs were readverised and filled proved that the sackings were a ploy to denationalise the port, but also for the perception of Liverpool, which had largely consigned its industrial relations difficulties to the past.



Chris Farrow, who admits he had "never really been north of Watford" until this job, has nearly finished overseeing the rejuvenation of Liverpool's waterfront

Farrow is pessimistic about the dispute. "It could go on for ever. This strike is unusual for Liverpool, it isn't about money or conditions. They just want their jobs back." The old image of strikers at Liverpool crystallises the contrast between the newer industries, which are clustering around the old docks, and the city's heritage. Mail-order companies linked to international shopping channels, with staff that speak several languages and an operation that manages to transfer low-cost items from Hong Kong to Norway at a profit, are the newer face of global trade at the port.

Electronic international channels are also bringing in call centres for banks and building societies, with the modest rental and office costs luring many to locate in the North West. The Halifax Building Society opened a call centre recently, while two more financial groups are moving their operations to Liverpool.

This week, Farrow had talks with companies pitching for the Kings Dock, the latest patch of reclaimed land earmarked for commercial life. It is planned to make Kings a high-tech attraction, with virtual reality expected to play a large part in shaping the development.

The pace at which the spare parts of Liverpool's docklands are being utilised is quickening. In two years, the Merseyside Development Corporation will come to an

end and private enterprise will be left largely to its own devices, without the aid of government resources. A year later, and an end will also come to the £1.6 billion available to the region from Europe's Objective 1 programme, which rebuilds areas of particular need. Between then and now,

inward investment is high on Farrow's agenda. Work began last week on Twelve Quays, an international technology campus that is intended to attract overseas pharmaceuticals companies, aided by Liverpool's strong academic record in the discipline.

And as the dull February weather casts a pale light over Farrow's dockside achievements, some of his thoughts are on

South Carolina. He is planning a trip there and to New York to follow business leads. He is hopeful of exploiting potential in the US to whom it is easier to market the traditionally troublesome image of Liverpool than to many countries because of the historical and geographical links.

"This role is far more worldwide than that in London. I've travelled much more to market Liverpool, and it is encouraging that the response is increasing. Companies want to come here," he says.

Inward investment is not, however, a fast-moving area. Farrow explains that what started as a lunch in San Francisco in February 1992 only recently became a reality when CostCo, the discount shopping club, opened operations.

A similar geographical tie that has produced a stream of business in recent times is Ireland. But Farrow is fearful that the bomb that scarred London's Dock-

lands and threatened the future of the Anglo-Irish peace process will affect this connection in the long-term.

Liverpool has opened several food-processing operations using produce generated in the Irish Republic, the economy of which has improved in tandem with the peace in Northern Ireland. "Undoubtedly, it has benefited from a knock-on effect of Northern Ireland's economic jump, but there is a cloud hanging over that now."

Liverpool's dock regeneration has created more than 14,000 new jobs and its reclaimed 342 hectares of land and its goal for the end of the development corporation's lifetime is to create the potential for 25,000 jobs. But with that potential clouded by Irish-related events and the threat of a blockade by dock workers at other ports, Farrow is hoping that the storm passes quickly.

High points of viewing a London house of treasures

Joanna Pitman goes behind the doors of Clerical Medical's main office

Having the good fortune to own as a principal office a building designed by James "Athenean" Stuart, the contemporary authority on classical Greek architecture, in one of the oldest squares in London, St James's, is one thing. To find that it is filled with fine vaulted and domed interiors decorated in a rich classical style, including a boardroom said to be the finest drawing room in the square, must surely be something more than mere good fortune.

Lichfield House, 15 St James's Square, next door to the London Library, was bought for £12,750 in 1886 by the Clerical Medical and General Life Assurance Society. Founded in 1824 to provide financial services for the clergy and the medical profession, it has since expanded into an international investment and insurance group with £13 billion in funds under management at the end of 1995. But today's clients no doubt hope that its fund managers are as shrewd as their forebears. For Lichfield House today, since extensive renovation in the early 1980s, stands out as one of the finest and earliest British examples of the Greek Revival period in architecture.

The first house on the site was built in 1673 and occupied by Frances, Duchess of Richmond, a beauty of her day known as "La Belle Stewart" for her pose as the model for Britannia on the old penny. In the mid-18th century, Thomas Anson, MP for Lichfield, acquired the original building and, giving new breadth to his interest in Greek and Roman antiqui-

ties, commissioned "Athenean" Stuart, a fellow member of the Society of Dilettante, to build a new house. Stuart had studied in Rome and had made a series of records of Greek architecture. But the basis of his fame as a classical authority rested largely on his book, *The Antiquities of Athens*, published in 1762.

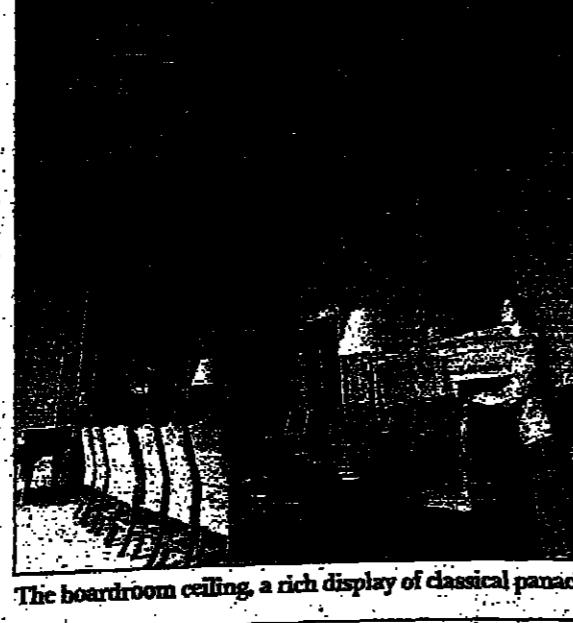
The house he built reflects his classical taste, incorporating the first example of his use of a Greek temple form for an urban terraced house.

Indeed, Lichfield House is the only surviving example of a domestic facade by Stuart. In the early 19th century, at the behest of Anson's son, the house was enlarged and embellished by Samuel Wyatt, and his Staffordshire family of architects and builders. Wyatt devised a series of intercommunicating rooms that stretched through to a stable block in Duke Street. Along with the original kitchen, these backrooms have been replaced by modern interiors fronting on Duke

Street for day-to-day office use by Clerical Medical staff. But it is principally the ceilings to which we must lift our gaze. The boardroom, the former drawing room, occupies the entire three-window-frontage. On entering, the eyes are drawn towards the heavily ornamental ceiling, a richly gilded and intricately carved display of classical panache. Rosettes, arabesques and palm leaf designs radiate from the centre. Around them, in an octagonal form, are eight painted panels, each portraying subjects from Greek mythology. These were painted in 1794 by Biagio Rebecca, an Italian who had made a name for himself with work on the interiors of the State Apartments at Windsor Castle.

The former music room, now the committee room, also has a richly decorated ceiling, set off by pale blue and pink, that give it a lightness of touch. Around the central chandelier, eight panels frame paintings of dancing and musical figures, believed to be the work of Angelica Kauffmann, who worked with Robert Adam.

There remains an impressive collection of original decorative pieces, fluted pilasters, friezes, mirror frames and other ornaments designed by Stuart. A number of these reflect styles used in his work at Spencer House and St James's Palace. But above all, it is the ceilings that capture the attention, being compelling enough to cause dire distraction in Clerical Medical's committee and board meetings if their members are classically inclined.



The boardroom ceiling, a rich display of classical panache

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Hangover feeling as equities fail to shine

THE equity market had that morning-after-the-night-before feel about it as brokers struggled into work after Thursday night's annual Society of Investment Analysts Dinner at the Grosvenor.

Not only did traders lack their normal sparkle, but both share prices and giltts looked a little under the weather. The overnight fall on Wall Street and another early setback for the Dow Jones industrial average in early trading last night put a dampener on events. Traders also have to contend with a worse than expected public sector borrowing requirement and the expiry of the February index options.

The FT-SE 100 index touched an all-time high of 3,791.6 in early trading, but was unable to hold its position. It eventually closed 8.9 points down at 3,770.8 — a rise on the week of 54.6.

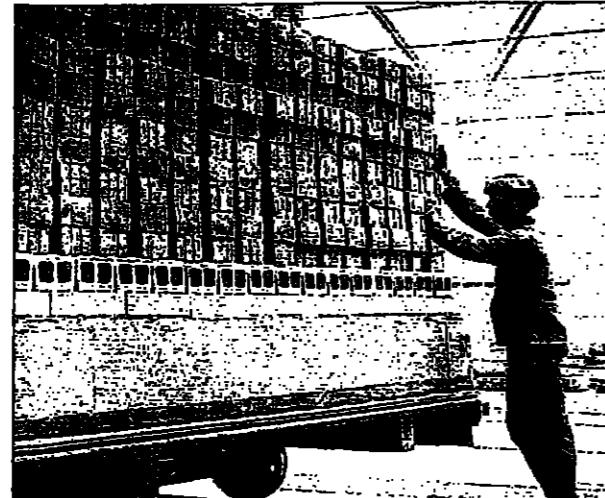
BET was an early feature, rising 11p to 195.5p after Rentokil decided to strike while the iron was hot. It has launched an aggressive £1.8 billion assault offering a mixture of cash and shares. The terms are nine new shares and 53 cash for every 20 BET shares. There is also a cash alternative of 179.5p.

BET quickly rejected the bid, describing it as "unsolicited and unwelcome and wholly inadequate". Clive Thompson, the Rentokil chief executive, countered by describing BET's track record as unimpressive, with profits falling under the leadership of John Clark, chief executive. Rentokil lost a further 25p to 33.5p.

UniChem's higher offer for Lloyds Chemist lifted the latter 23p to 493p. The new terms are 52p in cash and 16 UniChem shares and an extra 400p cash for every ten Lloyds shares. They value Lloyds at about £617 million, or 475p a share and tops the counter bid from Gehe, the German pharmaceutical distributor, by 25p a share.

The speculators are now waiting to see if the German company will bower back with a higher offer. UniChem finished 85p higher at 247.5p.

Bid speculation continued to drive Yorkshire-Tyre Tees a further 11p higher at £10.2 million as the wake of Thursday's dawn raid on the shares by free-spending Granada which can now call upon 24.5 per cent of the equity. City speculators see the raid as the first step



Redland is selling its brickmaking arm but also making a bid

sions for bad and doubtful debts.

Brokers appeared to be impressed with the group's underlying trading performance, but the shares ended up down at 341.5p.

News of the bid from Redland lifted Ennemix 1p to 35p. Redland, which is selling its brickmaking operation, is bidding 32p a share valuing the entire company at £58 million. This is the same price that Redland paid Nasch Sells for a 33.1 per cent stake in Ennemix in December.

Ennemix last night rejected the terms. It has been hit hard by the depressed building industry, and in the first six months of 1995 incurred a pre-tax loss of £223,000 and passed the dividend. Redland has agreed to pay 418p.

A profits warning left Adwest, the vehicle components group, nursing a fall of 5p at 113. The group expects to incur losses of £1.1 million in the first six months after the disposal of Air-Log and IWH, both loss-making businesses. This, combined with higher interest charges, is expected to result in a drop in pre-tax profits from £6.2 million to £4.6 million.

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Still in the same county, speculative buying was evi-

towards a full bid. It will also deter anyone else from launching a bid, giving Granada breathing space to sell the luxury hotels it acquired when it paid £3.9 billion for Forte recently. Yorkshire TV War-

riors also rose 13p to 83p, with Granada 31p firmer at 73p.

Still in the same county, speculative buying was evi-

thursday, shareholders approved the group's proposed £1.8 billion acquisition of Premier, the US electronics distributor. There had been some objections to the acquisition of Premier, which is three times the size of Farnell, from institutions who accused the company of being too generous with the terms.

The first set of figures from

Vendome, the luxury goods group, fell 38p to 545p after several profit downgrades. ABN Amro Hoare Govett and Henderson Crosthwaite have cut forecasts, worried by difficult conditions in Europe. Over the past three weeks, Henderson has reduced its forecast by £20 million to £250 million.

Yorkshire Electricity is again pushing Yorkshire Electricity higher, with a rise of 8p to 741p. In thin trading, a total of 628,900 shares changed hands in spite of recent derials from the company that it had received any bid approaches. Yorkshire is one of the three remaining electricity distributors not to have received a bid.

Farnell Electronics bounced back with a rise of 14p to 621p after going ex its 9-for-19 rights issue at 540p. On

the newly merged Lloyds TSB were warmly received by the City. They kicked off the bank's reporting season, revealing a rise in pre-tax profits last year from £1.79 billion to £2.07 billion, which included a five-month contribution from Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society.

The figure was, however, struck before charges totalling £425 million for restructuring the business and was achieved in spite of increased provi-

that the market with traders facing up to next week's auction.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt finished a couple of ticks lower at 101.83% as a total of 52,000 contracts were completed.

Among conventional issues, benchmark Treasury 8 per cent 2013 shed 1s at 99.9%, while at the shorter end, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was 51s better at 100413s.

□ NEW YORK: Wall Street pulled away from the worst levels in bonds in the late morning, but shares remained sharply lower. At midday, the Dow Jones industrial average was 35.04 points down at

5,516.33.

Profit warnings by

Automotive News

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Profits warning

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TAKE COVER 35

Insurance in aftermath of Docklands bomb

WEEKEND MONEY

PENSION WATCH

Money guide focuses on your future



Richard Thomson and Caroline Merrell measure up the New York and London markets

Trouble in the bubble on Wall St?

The air of disbelief in the New York stock market this week was almost palpable. Investors could not believe their luck: for seven straight days, the Dow Jones industrial average had reached record highs and burst through 5,600, a level that most analysts had not expected to see until late this year at best.

Investors, wondering whether this is the bubble before a 1987-style crash, are trying to find clues in the behaviour of the most powerful figure on Wall Street, Jeffrey Vinik, manager of the largest US mutual fund, the \$6 billion Fidelity Magellan. The mammoth fund, with its three million investors, is equivalent in size to one third of the entire UK unit trust industry.

Mr Vinik, 36, is a self-effacing, low-key number crunched, the kind of man you might not notice in a crowd. Those who know him describe him as a "regular guy" who gets in to his office at 7am and leaves promptly at 5pm to get home in time to put his three children to bed. Then he does another three hours work at home, planning his trading strategy for the next day. Under Mr Vinik's stewardship, the Magellan has trebled in size. The previous manager resigned citing overwork.

The Magellan fund's sheer size is not the only thing that makes Mr Vinik so feared. Famous investors such as War-



Vinik feared in market

ren Buffett tend to buy their shares and hold them for years or even decades. The Magellan fund, in contrast, is actively managed, which means it is constantly switching sectors.

Take high technology stocks. Mr Vinik was bullish last year and put 45 per cent of the Magellan fund into the sector. Initially, the sector motored ahead, but faltered towards the end of the year. The market started to wonder how long Mr Vinik would hold on to his high-tech shares. Technology share prices started to fall, simply because people feared that Mr Vinik might sell. In fact, he was already selling, but he did it so subtly that the market was unaware. This did not keep him out of trouble, however. Towards the end of last year, he

publicly sang the praises of several stocks. When it emerged a few weeks later that he had actually been selling the shares at the same time, there was an outcry. The authorities moved in to take a look, but all that happened is that Fidelity has forbidden all of its fund managers to speak publicly.

In his most recent controversial move, Mr Vinik has put more than 30 per cent of Magellan into cash and bonds, a very high figure for any equity investment fund. Now, Mr Vinik seems to be waiting for the inevitable correction, if not crash, in share prices. No wonder the rest of the market is worried.

So far, Mr Vinik's decision to hold more cash has not been followed by a stampede. Many analysts take a more sanguine view, pointing out that the advance is much more broadly based than that of 1987. They also note that the key historical relationship between the equity and bond markets is still in line. "This year, the bond market is strong while in 1987 the bond market was weak," says David Schulman, equity strategist at Salomon Brothers.

And while corporate profits may level out this year, lower economic activity is being balanced in investors' minds with the benefits of lower interest rates and subdued inflation. In other words, the optimism looks well-founded in reality.



Our passion for plastic prospects

Expensive UK credit cards face new competition, says Anne Ashworth

The British love their flexible friends, holding no fewer than 26 billion cards, which we used to spend £41 billion in 1995.

However, our affection for credit cards can blind us to their shortcomings. Although the bank base rate was cut to 6.25 per cent on January 18, the 50 per cent of card holders who use their plastic to borrow are still prepared to pay rates of more than 20 per cent.

Barclaycard, for example, has an Annual Percentage Rate of 22.60 per cent, plus a £10 annual fee, designed to raise revenues from those customers who clear their balances in full each month. If you borrow £1,000 for a year, you will pay £224.14 in interest. More than 50 per cent of card customers pay off the bill each month but the card

companies earn interest on 70 per cent of the amount borrowed on cards.

In recent years, there have been various attempts to challenge the sway of the big banks over the credit card market.

The Save & Prosper Group offers two cards, the first with a APR of 14.6 per cent and a £12 annual fee, the second with a base rate-linked return, currently 11.8 per cent. Holders pay no fee but do not enjoy the perk of an interest-free credit period, which, for many, is the principal attraction.

The latest interlopers come from America. After the launch this week of the RBS

Advanta card, a joint venture between the Royal Bank of Scotland and Advanta Corporation, a Pennsylvania-based credit card company, other US operations, including the People's Bank of Connecticut are planning UK card operations.

Ron Urquhart, managing director of People's Bank, believes the British can be persuaded to switch to lower cost cards. "The situation in the UK today is very much like that in America ten years ago. The Americans were not interest-rate sensitive. But they are now very much aware of rates and charges," he said.

People's Bank US cards carry a rate of 13.9 per cent. The RBS Advanta VISA has an eight-week, interest-free credit period, no fee and an APR of 15.9 per cent. The rate will move in line with the base rate, whose increases credit card companies have traditionally been swift to follow, while ignoring any reductions for as long as they can.

The card will be marketed by mail to those who have, in the past, shown a propensity to borrow. RBS Advanta claims that its rate is low because it does not have the high street banks' steep administrative costs.

But for those apt to forget their card payments, RBS Advanta may impose a £10 penalty if you go over your credit limit. There is another discretionary charge if you are 15 days late with a payment.

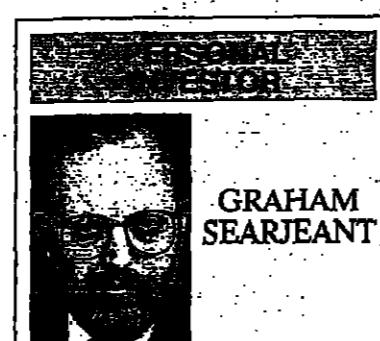
Perking up Eurotunnel

Never invest in a company for shareholder perks or tax breaks. Back in the dark days of November 1987, after the gale and the market crash, most of us did not, I trust, plunge a combined £800 million into Eurotunnel stock merely for the free travel concessions. Strong growth in the share price as opening drew nearer was the big attraction to many, who believed the prospectus and the Warburg hype. The prospect of a reliable rising income, within a few years of the tunnel opening the cross-Channel searoute, was compelling for those planning ahead for retirement. By now, sadly, the travel perks may be the best bet.

Still less should those who invested £600 million in the 1990 rights issue have been lured by half-price travel. But many stayed loyal to avoid missing those travel perks once the tunnel was built. Otherwise, would nearly 740,000 private investors have stayed on as the project's finances slithered from disappointment to disaster?

Believe it or not, 1987 investors could have multiplied their money about 4.5 times, provided they sold at the speculative peak in mid-1989. Even in January 1994, when the tunnel was dug and financial woes resolved ahead of the final £900 million issue, the units briefly regained 55p. After that, it was downhill almost all the way to 80p, valuing Eurotunnel at just £720 million. Hopes that something will turn up, always present before opening day, are now dim.

This week, financial mediators were appointed under French law. Eurotunnel remains solvent only because there is no



GRAHAM SEARNT

wish for it to be insolvent. Should pedants together demand their due, the emperor could not pay. Builders, bankers, managers and shareholders created a great commercial asset. It has transformed transport to the Continent. In the new millennium, it should bring great boons to traders and travellers and generate vast revenue surpluses.

This side of the horizon, however, it has no prospect of making a decent return on the capital invested. Interests of project managers and investors were fatally split. Real costs burgeoned. Progress was delayed. Equipment was late. Early traffic disappointed. Worst of all, inflation raged while the project was being built, then subsided.

The best investors can probably hope for their shares is to keep a worthwhile interest in a company made viable by banks swapping a lot of debt for shares and cutting interest rates on the rest. For most of us 120,000 remaining British investors, however, returns from travel

perks could now be greater. These cannot be bought or sold, so it is not reflected in market prices. If you bought just 100 units in 1987, now worth about £80, you are entitled to just one free return car trip on the shuttle. On official fares, this could be worth £200 and up to £350 net of the fee for compulsory prior registration. In practice, discounts could make the saving much less. If you own 150 of the 1990 shares, you are entitled to 50 per cent off one return trip and even 45 are worth a half-price single fare. Nearly 300,000 shareholders need to act soon because these trips must be taken by the end of October this year.

More shares earn privileges over many years. At the top end, 1,500 shares, worth about £1,200, entitle you to unlimited crossings for the length of the concession, free if bought at the 1987 issue or half-price for 1990 rights shares. If you live in Manchester and holiday in Jamaica or Lakeland, this is useless. If you like weekends in Amsterdam or a son in Brussels, the perks may yield far more than reinvesting the proceeds of your shares. That is also true for intermediate holdings.

This works only if liquidation is avoided by a deal with the banks and if the directors do not cancel the perks as a condition of that pain-sharing deal. Sir Alastair Morton, the British co-chairman, assures me they will not. But this may be a hard task. Perk-holders should help him by making their views known, and refuse to agree any deal that removes their biggest remaining asset.

Difficult year ahead after leap in share prices

After a remarkable rise in share prices last year, those in the City who gaze into crystal balls are giving warning that the UK stock market is unlikely to deliver quite the same performance again in 1996.

This will be a difficult year for the UK, analysts say, because of a slowdown in economic growth and the proximity of a general election.

Takeover bids and big rises in some technology shares drove the market up in 1995, with much of the boost in technology shares a reaction to some phenomenal increases in the US technology sector. Commentators do not expect this to be repeated in 1996, and predictions overall for growth in UK share prices in the next ten months are modest. As ever, the experts are divided. Some fund managers, such as M&G, believe the UK market will rise by about 10 per cent, while economists such as Robert Barry, of BZW, expect no significant rise in the rest of 1996.

Richard Hughes, M&G Investment Management joint managing director, said: "The market has generally been creeping up since the beginning of the year, on the back of lower interest rates and the strength of the US market." He expects the FT-SE 100 to end the year at about 4,000.

"UK companies with US subsidiaries will be helped by what is going on in the US," he says, but he is more cautious about manufacturing, particularly companies with big exports. Stephen Whitaker, head of UK equities for Perpetual, the fund manager, says: "We think there could be a sharp rise in the market for the short term, because of the rally in the bond market." He is more pessimistic for the outlook for the year. He sees little recovery in manufacturing, and thinks that growth will be in the financial sector. He does not expect the UK to follow the US market.

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

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Karen Zagor warns that merger handouts carry tax implications

In the excitement of receiving a cash or shares windfall from a building society merger, conversion or loyalty bonus scheme, members would do well to remember Benjamin Franklin's famous adage: "In this world nothing can be said to be certain except death and taxes".

The Inland Revenue warns that these handouts will be treated as capital gains and taxed. This applies to everything from shares being issued from mergers and conversions to the cash payouts promised to loyal members of the Britannia.

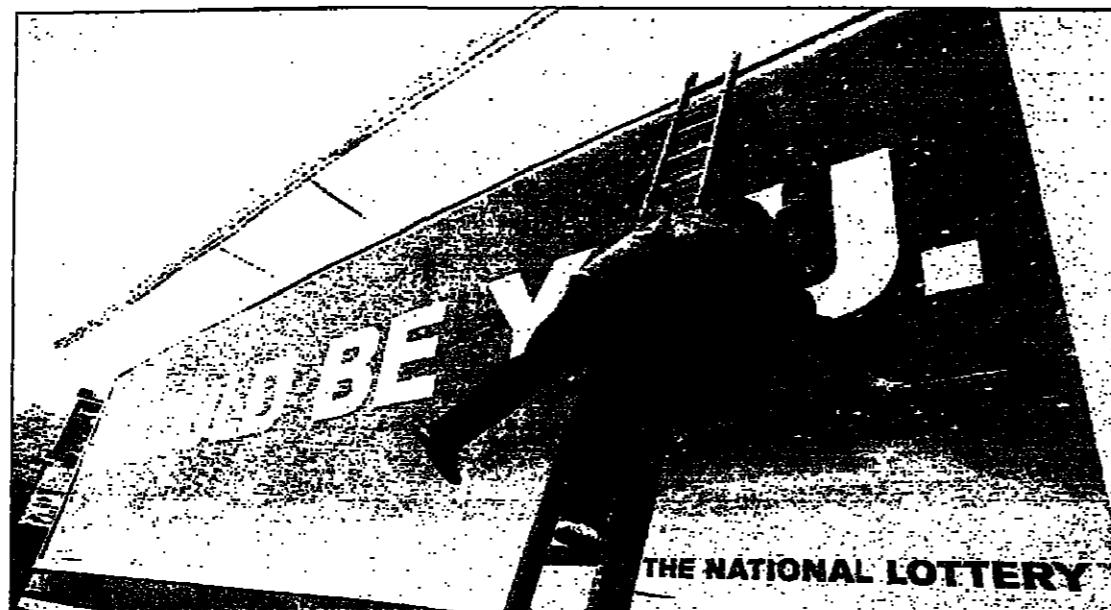
The reason behind the taxation is that the gains — whether in the form of shares or cash — are derived from an asset that you own. As such, you are receiving gains on your capital, and capital gains are subject to tax.

Members can be thankful that their payouts do not fall under the income tax umbrella. For most people, income tax is inevitable. Capital gains tax, on the other hand, is less threatening because the majority of taxpayers do not use their full annual capital gains tax exemption. The CGT allowance for the 1995-97 tax year is £6,300.

Maurice Fitzpatrick, senior tax consultant at accountants Chantrey Vellacott, says: "If you are going to receive shares from a society conversion or merger, then there is no tax to pay when you first get the shares. But when you decide to sell, there may be capital gains tax to pay." As a result, it is important to bear the tax implications in mind when timing the sale of your shares. If you plan to sell the shares in a year when you have already made substantial capital gains, then the tax liability may be greater than any gains from the sale of the shares.

A more pressing problem is that the cash or shares could push you into a higher tax bracket for all or part of the capital gains. "Any capital gains are added to your total income and treated as the top slice," says Mr Fitzpatrick. "If you were very close to

A price to be paid for those windfalls



No gain without pain: members of lottery syndicates could be landed with a liability for inheritance tax

being a higher rate taxpayer, this could tip you over the edge."

Mr Fitzpatrick notes that recipients of free shares do not have the benefit of CGT base costs, which allow a taxpayer to deduct the initial cost of buying the asset from the proceeds, thereby offsetting the gains against the costs. Since members have not had to buy their shares, essentially they have no base costs.

If your newly converted bank decides to reward shareholders with

dividends, these, too, will be taxed. Dividends are usually taxed at 20 per cent at source, but higher-rate taxpayers will have to reimburse the Revenue for the shortfall.

The tax implications of being rewarded for your loyalty through reduced mortgage or higher savings rates are more subtle. A reduced mortgage means the amount of tax relief on your mortgage interest payments (Miras) will also be reduced. Given that interest rates are

very low at present and that Miras has been whittled back to 15 per cent and only applied to the first £30,000 of a loan, most borrowers will gain more from the rate cut than they will lose from the reduced relief.

Savers who get improved rates should earn more from their investment, and investment income is subject to tax. At the moment, that tax is 25 per cent for basic-rate taxpayers.

Tax on savings will drop to 20 per cent in April for basic-rate taxpayers

with taxable income above £32,200. Higher-rate taxpayers, with more than £25,000 of taxable income, will have to pay 40 per cent tax on their savings income.

Julie Evans, tax specialist at Pannell Kerr Foster, is not convinced that the Revenue is right in imposing capital gains tax on the cash bonus paid to Cheltenham & Gloucester building society members over the merger with Lloyds Bank. "We have been in correspondence with the Inland Revenue and are currently considering the arguments that they have advanced. In the meantime I recommend that anyone liable to pay tax under the Revenue's ruling seeks advice before signing their cheque."

Anyone who fails to tell the Revenue about any capital gain by October 31, or who forgets to put it on their tax return, could face hefty penalties.

Lottery and Premium Bond winners fare better than building society members when it comes to tax. According to a Revenue spokesman: "There is no tax on any gambling winnings."

Members of lottery syndicates, however, need to be careful. If the winnings belong to one ticketholder, who then distributes the funds between all the members of the syndicate, there could be inheritance tax liabilities if the winning ticketholders die within seven years.

To prevent any inheritance tax problems, syndicate members must all agree that any winnings will be distributed by the winning ticketholder among all the members who have contributed to purchasing the tickets. "We do not stipulate that it is in writing, it could be a verbal agreement," a Revenue spokesman said.

Without such an agreement, every syndicate member could pay inheritance tax if their share of the pot is more than £154,000. They should also note that inheritance tax is paid, universally, at the 40 per cent rate. The threshold rises to £200,000 in April.

Get in a fix, and stick with it for five years

It is now six weeks into the new season for tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas). Although some of the more competitive fixed-rate accounts have been withdrawn, financial advisers believe some of the remaining fixed-rate Tessas continue to offer a good deal. However, they emphasise that these accounts are only for those who are committed to leaving their money alone for the five-year term of the product.

Alastair Altham, Johnson Fry Asset Managers marketing director, said the rates offered by some providers on their fixed-rate Tessas were higher than the five-year money market rates — which give an indication about what the City believes will happen to interest rates over the next five years. "Some societies appear to be fixing the money at a high rate in order to buy market share," he said.

But he warned investors to be careful of the transfer penalties which are being imposed on some of the fixed-rate accounts. He said: "180 days' loss of interest is not uncommon." Investors who are considering a fixed-rate Tessa should be absolutely sure that they intend to stay invested for the five years, he said.

Clydesdale Bank, for example, is offering a recommended 7.4 per cent fixed-rate account. Those who want to transfer will have to pay a transfer penalty of £20 plus an extra amount which will be based on the difference between the fixed rate and the prevailing rate of interest. Mr Altham said: "The extra cost is for unwinding the fixed-rate deal."

The choice for those interested in a variable-rate Tessa is much more straightforward. Anyone who wants to take out a variable-rate Tessa should get the best rate they can, with the lowest transfer penalties.

When the first range of Tessas was launched, many savers made their choice based on high initial rates offered by banks and societies. Unfortunately, some of these high rates were subsequently cut, leaving investors unable to switch out of uncompetitive products

because of transfer penalties. Among those recommended by both Johnson Fry and Moneyfacts, the magazine, is the 8 per cent variable rate on offer from the Northern Rock Building Society.

This is currently the highest rate available on the market. If this rate becomes uncompetitive, savers can switch out for £30, although the society could increase this fee.

Mr Altham said: "If you go for one with a low transfer penalty, you can vote with your feet and get out if you want to." Those looking for a new Tessa should also take into account any bonus that they could be in line for if the society converts or is taken over. Those with maturing Tessas in a society which has already announced its intention to float or be taken over, should remember that any bonus or shares they receive will be based on the size of their balance. These savers are in effect locked in to the society.

None of the Tessas in the best-buy table below are offered by the three societies — the Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Halifax — which are in the process of converting. Investors who have never had a Tessa before, or who are not tied in to keeping funds in one of the three societies mentioned, could gamble on putting money into a society which could convert. Those tipped include the West Bromwich, Bristol & West and the Skipton.

A recent survey from Which?, the magazine for Consumers' Association, found that based on past performance, building societies paid out £300 more on average than banks. It chose Tessas from some of the smaller societies such as Dunfermline as "best buys".

Mr Altham said: "If past performance is anything to go by, then some of the better Tessas will ultimately be offered by some of the smallest institutions."

CAROLINE MERRELL

FIRST TESSAS	Telephone	Notice of term	£ deposit*	% Rate	Interest paid
Yorkshire BS	0800 978936	5yr	9,000	7.80	F/V/Y
Bank of Ireland	01753 516516	5yr	500	7.25	F/V/Y
East Shilton BS	01455 844422	5yr	500	7.25	Y/Y
Principality BS	01222 344188	5yr	25	7.25	Y/Y
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 717505	5yr	3,000	7.25	Y/Y
Allied Trust Bank	0171 6260978	5yr	9,000	7.25	Y/Y
Dunfermline BS	0131 4552000	5yr	3,000	7.25	Y/Y
Market Harborough BS	01858 455244	5yr	9,000	7.15	Y/Y
Monmouthshire BS	01633 840454	5yr	7,100	7.10	Y/Y
Universal BS	0191 220973	5yr	1	7.10	Y/Y

FOLLOW-ON TESSAS	Telephone	Notice of term	£ deposit*	% Rate	Interest paid
Northern Rock BS	0800 505000	5yr	6,000	8.00	- Y/Y
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 717505	5yr	9,000	7.75	- Y/Y
Beth BS	01225 422271	5yr	25	7.50	Y/Y
Mercantile BS	0191 2569500	5yr	1	7.50	Y/Y
Northern Rock BS	0800 505000	5yr	3,000	7.50	F/V/Y
Clydesdale Bank	0800 222428	5yr	9,000	7.40	F/V/Y
West Bromwich BS	0121 6900024	5yr	3,000	7.35	F/V/Y
Yorkshire BS	0800 378598	5yr	8,000	7.30	F/V/Y
Bank of Ireland	01753 516516	5yr	7,250	7.25	F/V/Y
Allied Trust Bank	0171 6260978	5yr	8,000	7.25	F/V/Y

Source: Moneyfacts

Benefit rooted in days of the housekeeper

Women looking after disabled husbands are the victims of tax discrimination, Sarah Jones finds

Thousands of women are being discriminated against by the taxman, when they are trying to juggle working, bringing up children and looking after a disabled husband. The Government admits that the situation is anachronistic, but this week again obstructed attempts by Parliament to make amends.

Additional personal allowance (APA), which gives tax relief of £1,720 (£1,790 for the coming tax year), is generally claimed by unmarried or separated couples with children and by single parents. It can also be claimed by a married man whose wife is unable to

look after herself due to illness or disability — on top of his married couple's allowance. It cannot be claimed by a married woman with children whose husband is disabled.

The Government appreciates that it is an anomaly, an Inland Revenue spokeswoman says. "But it goes back to the days when a married man could claim a housekeeper allowance if he had an incapacitated wife and needed help someone to look after his children. The purpose of the allowance has been superceded by social security. Tax relief is not an efficient way to help the disabled."

This week the Government refused to back an amend-

ment to the Finance Bill tabled by Liberal Democrat MPs that would have given women the same APA as men. A Treasury spokesman says: "The Government believed people should be helped through social security. Tax relief is not an efficient way to help the disabled."

Ken Kelling, of Caring Costs, the charity that has campaigned for a change to APA rules, disagrees with that interpretation. "There is a strong economic justification for extending APA to women. So many carers have to give up work, thereby giving up pension rights and other means of providing for themselves. The tax allowance would encourage women to combine paid work with caring. That is far better than relying on social security."

As well as the controversy over disabled spouses, there is often confusion over when divorcees with children can claim APA. The rules say that the child must be "resident", but that does not mean all the time. The child can stay as little as one night a week or alternate weekends and the non-custodial parent can claim APA. The deciding factor is often whether the child has its own room and keeps toys and clothes there.

It is also usually assumed that the allowance has to be apportioned between divorced parents. But where there are two children both parents could claim the full allowance for each child. An unmarried couple living together with their children can claim only one APA between them.

married couple's allowance of £1,790 should be worth £429.60 (£1,790 x 24 per cent). But since the allowance is restricted to 15 per cent it is only £268.50. The difference is £161.10. That is multiplied by 100 and divided by 24 to get an allowance restriction of £671.25. It is rounded down to £670. The amount of allowance left in your tax code becomes £1,790 less £670 which equals £1,120. Twenty-four per cent of £1,120 is £269.50, the same as £1,790 at 15 per cent. Similar calculations are done for higher rate taxpayers.

"If you don't understand your tax code and its allowance reduction you should definitely write to your local tax office and ask them to explain," Mr Brodie says.

Tax Allowances and Reliefs is available from your local tax office. TaxAid has a helpline for people on low incomes. Tel: 0171 624 3768.

If you are a basic rate taxpayer a



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Janet Bush rehearses the arguments for and against a European single currency

DAVID LYTTLETON

Monetary union: what does it mean?

HELMUT KOHL, the German leader, put his future on the line this week by warning members of the Christian Democrat parliamentary group that he will stand for re-election in 1998 only if he is given full party backing on the single European currency. In doing so, he is hoping to save the European economic and monetary union (EMU), and to restore order among dissidents. Here, Weekend Money looks at the issues, and asks how Britain and its European neighbours would be affected if EMU goes ahead, and where Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, stands on the issue.

Q What would be the advantages of a single currency?

A The architects of monetary union argue that the single currency is necessary to make the single European market work. By having a single currency, those doing business and trading in the single market would avoid the uncertainty and expense of fluctuating currencies. It would also prevent so-called competitive devaluations where one member sought to gain advantage over others.

boosting its export potential through a weaker currency.

Q What are the disadvantages of the single currency?

A The fundamental flaw of the single currency is that the exchange rate can no longer be used as a tool of economic management, leaving policy-makers only with the option of fiscal policy and structural economic measures to influence the economy. The fear of opponents of monetary union is that, without near-perfect economic convergence before the formation of the single currency, existing economic advantage and disadvantage in different countries would become permanent and be exacerbated over time.

Q Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, warns that progressing too swiftly towards monetary union could bring serious political tensions. What exactly does he mean?

A He believes that genuine economic convergence cannot happen within the very tough timetable set by the Maastricht Treaty and that any attempt to form the single currency before convergence would lead to permanent pockets of economic success in some areas of the union, and areas of high unemployment, poverty and underperformance in other areas. This



could lead to deepening political problems and even, some have suggested, to war.

Q Where does the British Government stand on the issue of the single currency?

A The Government has come to a compromise stance on monetary union because of deep splits within the Conservative Party between pro-Europeans such as Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a large group of Eurosceptics on the right. It takes part in the continuing European debate but has chosen to opt out of the single currency — when and if it happens. It has made it clear that there is no question of Britain re-entering the Exchange Rate Mechanism in the near-term and the Maastricht Treaty stipulates that

currencies should trade within normal bands within the ERM for two years before joining the single currency. The British policy is "wait and see" (and hope that the whole experiment collapses).

Q If 1999 is met by others, is there any chance that Britain would join a single currency by that date?

A It is, on current economic projections, conceivable that Britain will be one of very few countries to have met the Maastricht criteria. But the decision to join is political and may depend on which party is in power at the time. Labour is less Eurosceptic than the Government but it is still unclear whether it would allow a critical mass of European countries to join the single currency. This is vehemently opposed by Germany and Britain among others.

Q Could Britain survive outside the system?

A Yes, and would probably thrive.

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First 100 days of the euro

David Rudnick on how a switch to new money would affect you

their systems over to the euro (estimated at more than £900 million at 1994 prices) to their customers?

A Banks generally point out that since conversion costs will be spread over a number of years, they will not be particularly onerous.

Q Will homeowners with mortgages be affected by a changeover?

A This is yet to be decided. The euro is likely to be broken into 100 units, like pence to a pound. The European Commission expects the euro to be known colloquially as the pound in Britain, the mark in Germany and so on. Similarly the present penny will metamorphose into a (euro)penny, and the pfennig into a (euro)pfennig.

Q How would bank accounts be affected?

A High street banks, such as NatWest, foresee no problems. Current account holders will simply have their balance converted to euros (today's rate would be about 1.25 to the pound).

Q That sounds fine, but will the banks quietly pass on the costs of changing

benefit from reduced long-term inflation. So will people retiring to Spain since pension purchasing power will no longer be eroded by a weakening pound. The euro will also make it easier for mobile employees living in different EU states throughout their career to obtain fully transferable pension rights.

On the downside, the severe convergence criteria on public debt, which form a key entry requirement to the euro, would, if adhered to, slash state spending on pensions. Private and company schemes may have to expand sharply to cover the growing pension needs of our ageing population. However, pension fund managers voice cautious optimism.

Q Are retailers preparing for the currency changeover if and when it comes?

A Only the most general thought has been given so far, based in part on recent experience of metrication. Dual pricing of products and conversion tables are likely to be displayed, but the big retail chains are hoping that the day never dawns. Sainsbury's finance director says: "We've got one hell of a logistical headache coming our way."

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Take cover from bomb damage

One week after an IRA bomb ripped through Docklands, the country's biggest insurance companies are making their assessments of the cost of the damage.

Unlike the Bishopsgate blast in the City of London in April 1993, when prestigious office blocks were targeted and the total bill came to £650 million, last Friday's blast affected many residential flats. As surveyors pick through the wreckage of the South Quay office blocks, householders in the East End have also been repairing shattered windows and burst pipes. Most residents lived in flats owned by Tower Hamlets council, and so will be covered by the council for any structural damage. But only those who had taken out contents insurance separately will be able to claim for any internal damage to possessions or water pipes.

All household policies for bricks-and-mortar and personal possessions insurance pay out for

damage caused by terrorist attacks, riots, civil commotion, strikes and labour or political disturbances. Those whose homes were damaged in the Brixton riots in London and the St Pauls, Bristol, and Moss Side, Manchester, riots would therefore have been covered if they had an appropriate policy.

The principal exclusions are war and radioactive contamination. The Association of British Insurers says this means ordinary policies will not cover seepage from nuclear waste dumped or buried near your home. Neither will you be covered for risks which seem distant now, but would have been frighteningly real in the 1940s: those of civil war, rebellion, insurrection or a military coup. With regard to radiation, farmers whose livestock was contaminated by the fallout from the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in April 1986 were compensated by the British Government.

If your car is blown up in a terrorist attack you will be covered if you have comprehensive insurance, but not if you have just third party cover. Most insurers will agree to pay out if you have third party fire and theft cover, although some might argue that a bomb blast was not the same as a fire. However, the ABI says it knows of no disputes between insurers and motorists on such an issue.

If you are injured in a blast and have no personal accident cover or life insurance protection, your only hope of compensation is through the criminal injuries compensation board. Some life policies pay off the mortgage and compensate you or your dependants for any loss of earnings you may incur through death or injury.

As for the policeman who spotted the lorry carrying the bomb and was almost hit by a car flung across the road by the force of the blast, the ABI says he would have been unable to claim against the driver of the car, had he collided with it, because the driver was not responsible for the direction the vehicle was travelling in.

An ABI spokesman said: "Such incidents emphasise the need for people with dependants or with financial commitments to take out some sort of cover in case an accident renders them unable to work."

MARIANNE CURPHEY



The aftermath of the Docklands bomb

Free policy is no accident

Royal Bank of Scotland customers have been treated to a mailshot offering them £1,000 of complimentary accident protection — and the option to buy more cover at "especially economical premium rates".

Several banks have used this gimmick to let their customers know that they do insurance as well as banking. If you die as the result of an accident, £1,000, plus any addi-



tional cover you take out, will be paid to your estate. However, if you are aged 75 to 80, only half of the benefit will be paid. One slight hitch is that your £1,000 will be renewed for a period of ten years at no extra cost — "provided you remain a Royal Bank of Scotland customer".

Additional cover ranges from £2.35 a month for £20,000 benefit to £3.55 for £60,000. The mailing makes much of the fact that there is no medical examination.

While it is always important to make sure your dependants are provided for should you die, there may be better ways of spending your money.

Penny O'Nions, a financial adviser based in Amersham, says: "The premiums are certainly reasonable, but then the

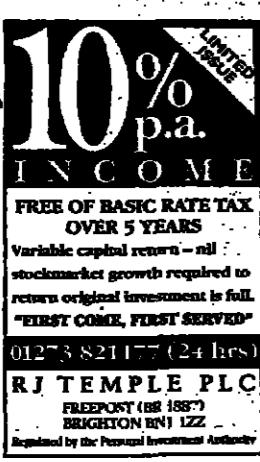
likelihood of an accidental death is relatively small, even on the bank's own figures. You are far more likely to die of a heart attack, or be maimed by an accident, still alive but in a wheelchair. So look at life insurance with accelerated benefits and at critical illness insurance."

The younger you are, the cheaper cover. A 35-year-old woman can get life assurance that gives £25,000 benefit for as little as £5 a month. Critical illness, which pays out if you suffer a serious illness or disability, will cost another £3 a month.

Jane Goodwin, for the Royal Bank of Scotland, says: "The offer is really a freebie. There are no strings attached. Customers do not have to pay anything for the first £1,000 of cover."

Marks one of ten for the mailing? Ms O'Nions says: "No more than four out of ten. It's simply not something I would suggest to my clients because it's unlikely to happen to them."

SARAH JONES



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PRUDENTIAL

Take a long view if backing this phone firm, says Karen Zagor

Should small investors back Orange, the mobile phone company, when it floats next month?

Orange customers will soon receive booklets on the flotation; customers can register interest in becoming investors by returning a reply slip. They will not, however, receive incentives to buy shares. An Orange spokesman said: "We didn't want to distort a long-term investment decision with short-term incentives."

A pathfinder prospectus should be published in early March, with flotation by the end of the month.

Analysts believe that Orange is a good bet. Orange, owned by British Aerospace and Hutchinson Whampoa of Hong Kong, is expanding rapidly and there is little reason to expect a reversal of fortune.

Jo Oliver, telecommunications analyst with NatWest Stockbrokers, says: "We're advising people to take up the offer. We believe it could be very rewarding."

There are, of course, risks involved. Share prices are subject to market forces as well as the company's own performance. There is also the danger that Orange's profitability could be damaged by a price war, especially if low-cost provider Mercury One-2-One expands more quickly than anticipated. Cellnet and Vodafone, the two biggest UK players, are already cutting



Ripe for investment: Orange should prove a good bet for long-term capital growth

prices and may introduce more dramatic reductions if Orange threatens to take more of their customer base.

"There is also the risk that the industry will not grow as people are forecasting, or that competitors will come back with a very strong product," says Mr Oliver. "But there is nothing to indicate that this will happen in the short term."

Analysts are bullish on Orange because the telecommunications industry as a whole promises strong growth in Britain in the next decade, and Orange itself is exceeding.

In less than two years, Orange has won 25 per cent of the digital phone market, and its customer base keeps growing. Its February figures show 410,000 customers, against 400,000 for Vodafone in December. Vodafone does not have more up-to-date figures but says it still leads the digital market.

Orange's share of the total UK cellular phone market is a

more modest 7 per cent. Vodafone and Cellnet, which each have a 43 per cent share of the total market because of their huge analogue customer base, still dominate. Analogue, however, is already considered obsolete. Digital connections are clearer, more reliable, more secure and far more effective in transmitting data.

Analysts are bullish on Orange because the telecommunications industry as a whole promises strong growth in Britain in the next decade, and Orange itself is exceeding.

Unlike Mercury One-2-One, the other newcomer, which has concentrated on building custom within the M25, Orange's strategy has been to expand rapidly through the country. Its network now cov-

ers about 90 per cent of mainland Britain, although it is not yet in Ireland or on the Continent. Now that Orange's range is above 80 per cent, it plans to target the lucrative corporate market.

Orange has won customers by offering competitive prices and a comprehensive package, including fully itemised bills, three-year warranties and 24-hour replacement phones.

Of the three other mobile phone companies, only Vodafone is quoted. Cellnet is controlled by British Telecommunications and Securicor, and Mercury One-2-One is owned by Cable and Wireless and US West, the American regional phone group.

Vodafone's shareholders have done well since it was floated. The share price has more than doubled since the company became fully independent in 1991. Vodafone's

annual disconnection (or churn) rate is improving from a peak of 28 per cent in 1994-95, but at 24.9 per cent, is still high. Orange's churn was 18 per cent in 1995, falling to 16 per cent in the final quarter.

Analysts with ABN-Amro Hoare Govett attribute the below-average churn to Orange's more expensive handsets making people think before buying. Orange can control its product through direct selling, unlike Cellnet and Vodafone, which were compelled to use service providers when they were set up. Service providers are responsible for their own tariffs and special offers, not the phone company. This may explain inconsistencies in Vodafone and Cellnet rates.

Orange may find itself at a disadvantage if it needs to grow through expanding beyond Britain. Vodafone already has contracts in 36 countries, but Orange has no presence overseas, although it is currently running a trial in Germany.

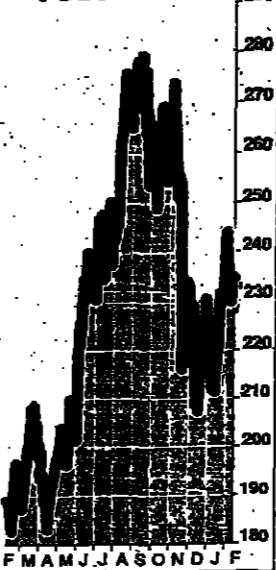
Overall, potential for growth in the sector is strong. Britain lags Scandinavia and the US in mobile phone use. Only 9.4 per cent of Britons have mobile phones, against 23 per cent of Norwegians and Swedes. By 2000, the UK figure is expected to be 20 per cent.

Although Orange is a suitable investment for those seeking capital growth, it is not for anyone seeking income. Analysts do not expect dividends before 2000, and NatWest Securities says they are unlikely before 2005. Indeed, the company is not expected to post a profit before 1998.

Non-customers can register interest through a stockbroker or through Orange, whose information line is 0973 100 001.

Orange prepares for market

VODAFONE



THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

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Karen Zagor offers some tips to mobile phone users



Women who need a phone only for emergency purposes should consider one with a low rate for line rental

Had the Prince of Wales used a modern digital mobile phone for his late night chats with Camilla Parker Bowles instead of an old-fashioned analogue model, their conversation would have been safe from the prying ears of hackers.

Deciding between a digital and analogue model is just one of many dilemmas faced by a mobile phone buyer. There is such a confusing array of tariffs that it would take weeks with an ordinary calculator to work out the best rate.

Rates are changing so rapidly that it is hard to keep track of them. So it is hardly surprising that a Consumers' Association study found that 38 per cent of mobile phone users were unhappy with their tariff packages.

Part of the problem is that, in order to use your phone, you agree to pay a certain tariff for a set amount of time. Unless you accurately predict your phone usage at the outset, you can get locked into an unsuitable arrangement. The minimum initial contract is usually a year, after which you can cancel with 90 days' notice. The minimum contract, therefore, is effectively 15 months.

Another complication is that Cellnet and Vodafone generally use service providers — or middlemen — who have their own complicated array of charges. If you sign up with a service provider, you are the server's customer rather than the phone company's customer.

Ian White, editor of *Mobile News*, says: "When buying a

On call and on the move

mobile phone, you must do the same amount of research as you would if you were buying a car or a computer. The main cost is the ongoing costs of the calls and the line rental, not the phone itself. You need to think about when, where and how you are going to use the phone. Then go to a specialist high street shop or directly to the network because it is a complicated sale and you need to find someone who will sell you the right phone at the right rate."

■ **Usage:** Peoples Phone has a computer system that asks customers about their phone needs and habits, and selects a system to suit their needs. If you are a woman who only needs a phone for emergency purposes when travelling alone or with children, you want to go for a low line rental rate. Peoples Phone, which provides air time itself, suggests a line rental rate of £1.74 including VAT. Calls are then charged at flat rate of 70p a minute. The choice of phone itself will depend on whether you need a powerful car phone or something small and light enough to slip into a handbag. Phone prices start at £99. The average price of a decent analogue phone is about £50.

At the other extreme is the

digital tariff for the high user. Peoples Phone suggests monthly line rental of £8.75 including VAT, which includes a free call allowance of £2.20. Peak charges are 20p a minute, off-peak are 8p a minute. The phone can be used throughout Europe. Orange charges £50 a month for its Talk 200, which includes 200 minutes of free airtime. Peak charges are 15p a minute, off-peak are 9p a minute.

■ **Clarity:** The quality of mobile connections is improving, and digital connections can be very clear, but it is important to remember that a mobile phone is basically a radio transmitter. "You don't expect your car radio to work in tunnels, so it isn't fair to criticise mobile phones for not working in lifts," says Mr White.

■ **Privacy:** If privacy is paramount, a digital phone is the best choice. The digital technology automatically scrambles the conversation while you speak, making it safer than a land-line whereas conversations on an analogue phone can be picked up easily.

■ **Counting the minutes:** Orange has always charged calls by the second instead of

rounding up to the nearest minute or half-minute, which was the traditional charging pattern for Vodafone and Cellnet. Vodafone and Cellnet have recently cut prices, but the lower rates are only available to a small proportion of customers who have digital phones.

■ **Getting the message:** Messages are another area where charges vary wildly. Vodafone charges 35p to leave and 25p to retrieve a message. Orange charges 7.5p to retrieve messages, while Mercury One-2-One usually charges nothing.

■ **Charging your friends:** It costs 35p a minute to ring a Vodafone or Cellnet number from a fixed line. Orange sets the charges at 14.2p a minute.

■ **Mobility:** If you need a phone for travel, it is no good signing up with a low-cost provider and then discovering that the phone does not work two miles beyond your home. Orange has a good range within the UK, but cannot yet be used abroad. Vodafone, on the other hand, has arrangements in 36 countries. Mercury One-2-One is strong within the M25, but has fairly scant coverage beyond.

■ **Flexibility:** If you are worried that your phone needs might change over a year, look for a flexible provider. Peoples Phone, for example, allows you to switch to a different tariff package while still under contract. Orange allows customers to switch if the original tariff is unsuitable.

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*Annualised past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance, and the value of units and income from them may go down as well as up. Investors may not get back the amount they invested. Tax relief on PEPs are tax-free, subject to certain conditions. Baillie Gifford & Co Ltd is the investment manager of the Baillie Gifford British 350 Fund. Baillie Gifford & Co and Baillie Gifford & Co Ltd are regulated by IMRO.

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And every penny of that
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Nationwide	4.7%	3.5%	2.1%
Woolwich	4.6%	3.4%	2.1%
Halifax	4.5%	3.3%	2.0%
Allied Dunbar Extra Income PEP	7.6%	7.6%	7.6%

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Saints (The Scottish American Investment Company PLC) is a £500 million international investment trust. It has an excellent income record having paid a rising dividend every year for the last 22 years. Its current yield is also 70% higher than the average general trust.³

You can invest in a Saints PEP, and like a TESSA, you'll pay no tax on your returns.

Saints is a great way into the international stock markets thanks to its diverse range of investments and broad spread of risk. That's not to say you should invest all your funds into Saints - shares are more risky than deposits - but a TESSA combined with a New Saints PEP for its stock market returns may be just the solution.



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Flexibility

Saints is totally committed to the private investor. Over 20,000 own shares and many have built up their holdings through regular saving or investing lump sums.

Whatever your reason for saving you'll find a New Saints PEP an ideal solution. Unlike a TESSA, if your circumstances change, you can increase your savings or access your money whenever you need it.

To find out why you really need a New Saints PEP, complete the coupon or call us free, but hurry we need your application by 29th March for the 1995/96 tax year.

I've done well with myTESSA. Now I want stock market performance with a tax free New Saints PEP.



An International Investment Trust

Saints is managed by Stewart Ivory & Company Ltd which is regulated by IMRO.

Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The value of your investment, and the income from it, may fall as well as rise and you may get back less than you invested. Personal taxation rates and the tax treatment of PEPs may change in the future.

¹Source HSW TESSA Sector Index to 31.12.1995. ²Source AITC, share price performance, dividends reinvested to 30.11.1995. ³Source BEW, 30.12.1995.

Service worth saving

Morag Preston says
post offices are planning to be the supermarkets of the financial world

When a local bank closes in a high street or a rural community, the Post Office is often the only financial institution left providing customers with a wide range of services from Girobank to National Savings.

In the UK, there are around 19,400 post offices, each acting as a safe house for customers' finances and a place from which to receive pensions, savings stamps or motor vehicle licences. Only 43 per cent of parishes in England are without a post office, compared with 90 per cent that survive without a bank or building society, according to a survey by the Rural Development Company.

Between 1991 and 1995, however, the number of rural post offices fell by 4 per cent, to about 10,000. On Valentine's Day last year, the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CAB) called on the Government to halt the closure of rural sub-post offices, which it said were an "essential life-line" for millions of people.

Of the CAB clients surveyed, 70 per cent were receiving state benefit, more than one third were without a car, and a quarter did not have a bank account. Almost half of those questioned said they paid at least one of their household bills at their local post office.

Last year, Girobank, which is owned by the Alliance & Leicester Building Society, processed 7.5 million transactions weekly and handled more than £64 billion of business takings, equivalent to £1 in every £4 that passed through a UK till. Girobank is unique among UK clearing banks in having direct links with 16 countries in the international Giro network, including most of Western Europe, Scandinavia and Japan.

As well as providing Giro cheques on behalf of the Benefits Agency, its business services include Transcash, used for collecting mail order, rent, gas, and electricity payments.

Girobank Keyway, an interest-bearing current account, offers 0.5 per cent gross on deposits of more than £1, rising to 0.75 per cent on more than £2,000 and 1 per cent on £5,000 plus. The interest rate on Linksave, the plastic card-based account, is 0.35 per cent gross on between £1 and £499, 0.85 per cent on £500-£1,999, and 2.10 per cent on £2,000 plus.

Overdrafts with the Girobank Current Account are charged monthly at 0.99 per cent net if they are authorised, and 2.2 per cent if they are unauthorised.

There are around 1.2 million Alliance & Leicester Giro customers. They do not count as members of the society, so will not benefit from the free shares to be distributed at flotation, unless they also hold Alliance & Leicester qualifying share accounts or mortgages.

Treasury-backed National Savings are another popular service available at the



Those were the days: there were more post offices but fewer services

post office. By March last year, 14 million deposits and nine million withdrawals had been made through National Savings, which offer a wide range of services, including Capital Bonds, Pensioner Bonds, Children's Bonds and Income Bonds. Basic National Savings certificates pay 5.35 per cent tax-free, and are guaranteed if held for five years.

On ordinary accounts start at £10, and go up to £10,000. Investors have instant access, and the first £70 of annual interest is tax-free. The interest rate is 1.75 per cent gross on less than £500 and 2.75 per cent gross on sums greater than that if the account has been open for longer than a calendar year. Investment accounts start at £20 and go up to £100,000. The taxable interest rate is 5 per cent gross on less than £500, 5.5 per cent on £500 plus, and 5.75 per cent on £25,000 or more. The rates change according to the base rate.

The Post Office is also becoming a leading player in the travel market, offering certain foreign exchange facilities from its "one-stop holiday shops" since last year. Around 3,000 post offices sell travel insurance, including 600 larger outlets that provide a full range of on-demand bureau de change facilities at a lower rate than that offered by most high street banks. Customers can use their credit cards to pay for foreign currency and travellers' cheques, in addition to being able to order currency from smaller offices. Ten-year passports can also be ordered through main branches. The agreement to give Post Office Counters greater freedom follows the Government decision to abandon the privatisation of Royal Mail and Parcel Force. It enables the Post Office, through 4,000 branches, to act as one of the biggest sellers of National Lottery tickets.

Over the next few years, the Post Office will install computer terminals to link its network, with the aim of £150 million from new business before the year 2000. By then, customers could be popping into their local branch to cash in money-off coupons, access mobile telephone services, pay-for travel and theatre tickets, and even motorway tolls and parking schemes, says the Post Office.

Has your TESSA matured? Whatever next?

Around 2 million people invested in a TESSA early in 1991. If you're one of them, congratulations. You may have already received - or be about to receive - an attractive tax-free payout.

And you may be thinking that re-investing the capital from your matured TESSA in a new TESSA is the best decision to make now. After all, you have done well with this form of investment over the past 5 years.

But just stop and think. Things have changed since 1991. Interest rates, for example, are currently far lower - with no short-term prospect of an increase. Different kinds of tax-free investments, such as PEPs, have been introduced and developed. And in any event, changes in your own circumstances and outlook could mean that a new TESSA may not be the ideal choice for you. But even then, you'll need to decide how best to use the tax-free interest you have accumulated, since you may re-invest your capital in a new TESSA.

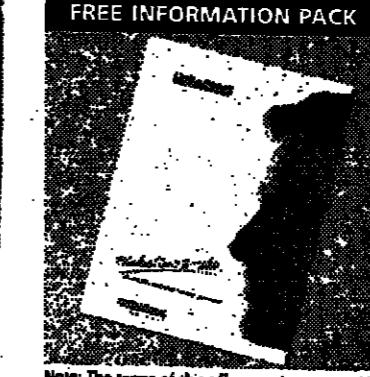
So what really is best for you? There are no "off-the-peg" answers to this question. You should consider the alternatives carefully - with full regard to your overall financial position. And this is where ProVision can help.

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Robert Miller examines Micropal's survey of 140 trusts launched last year

The prospect of an early cut in interest rates, after the Bank of England signalled on Wednesday that the Government was back on course to meet its inflation target, is good news for unit trust managers.

Savers, who outnumber Britain's ten million mortgage borrowers by five-to-one, will have to consider seriously whether they can get a better return for their money, either in capital or income terms, elsewhere. Unit and investment trusts offer the most suitable exposure to equities because they provide a spread of risk. That does not mean, however, that they eliminate it.

New unit trust launches generally abound at this time of year, with the run up to the end of the tax year on April 5 being linked with making the most of your annual £6,000 personal equity plan (Pep) allowance.

This year, there is even more to play for with the extra billions of pounds in profits from matured Tetas to be reinvested. But about now, investors, many of them first-timers, who helped to push the value of funds under management in unit trusts last year through the £100 billion barrier, and swell the number of unit holder accounts to nearly seven million, will be wanting to know how their money is faring.

In a special survey for Weekend Money, Micropal has tracked the fortunes of last year's 140 new trusts. On the basis that most unit trust investments should be embarked on with at least a three-year time view, it is unfair to read too much into a relatively poor performance at the outset. There is also the inevitable charging handicap to overcome, although some trusts now carry no front-end load. And, it could be that the particular stock markets or geographic regions you have chosen had a rough time. Nevertheless, the minimum

How the newcomers performed



New Pep plans and babies abound in the spring

performance yardstick by which you can measure your trust at any time is whether it is at least matching and preferably beating similar trusts.

By far and away the most popular type of trust to be launched last year was UK gilt and fixed-interest funds, boosted by the debut of the new-style corporate bond Peps. Of the 36 newcomers, only Fleming's two Select bond trusts produced consistent profits since launch. But a number of others have beaten their sector average, or, as has been the case so far this year, limited the loss. Those that have matched or beaten the generally accepted performance benchmarks include Clerical Medical's Extra In-

come, Virgin's Income, Scottish Amicable's Corporate Bond, Murray's Corporate Bond, Hill Samuel's Managed Extra Income, Allied Dunbar's Extra Income and Cazenove's High Income Portfolio.

In the UK Equity Growth stable, the star among the 13 new trusts is Halifax's Growth trust, which in the year to February 1 is up 23 per cent, against an average sector profit of 20% for every £100 invested. In all cases charges have been taken into account. Also showing a steady profit since launch is Marks & Spencer's UK 100 Companies trust, which has made up for periods of not quite matching the sector average by showing

a 1 per cent profit so far this year against an average loss of more than 3 per cent for other trusts.

Richard Branson's Virgin again showed a credible performance with its UK Index Tracker trust in the UK Growth and Income sector. It is up more than 18 per cent since May last year and is closely followed by Baillie Gifford's British 350 trust in the UK Equity Income category. Halifax Income is up 23 per cent since May last year.

Those investors who went for a double-riskaverse strategy by investing in unit trusts that in turn invest in investment trusts will have been disappointed. Neither Abtrust nor Dunedin's Innovations have even matched the sector average for similar trusts. Abtrust, for example, is up 3.73 per cent since May against an average performance of 10 per cent.

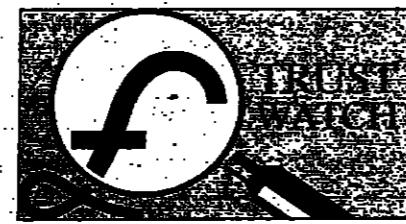
On the International Equity Growth side, Abbey's Global Opportunities was the star performer, with profits over every period measured since May 1. The managers most pleased with themselves will be those who went for North America. The four new trusts from Fleming (2), Schroder and Jupiter have not only all been in profit since launch but they have also managed to more or less match the sector average and in some periods actually beat it.

The Far East, excluding Japan, also produced some healthy profits. Among the seven newcomers last year, the stars were Friends Provident's Asian Growth and Britannia's Pacific Growth trusts. Emerging Markets, once a favourite theme for new launches, produced only three trusts, from Abbey, Hill Samuel and again Fleming. All three have comfortably outperformed similar existing trusts.

Plenty of variety on offer to investors

The latest batch of new trust launches offers plenty of variety for investors. Leading the parade is Fleming (0500 500 161), the UK's largest investment trust manager, with a Worldwide Income investment trust in which investors can use their £6,000 personal equity plan allowance for the current tax year and then again for the next year after April 6.

The Fleming trust will have a split-capital structure with two share classes - Ordinary Income and Zero Dividend Preference or a package of the two in a unit. Up to 60 per cent of the trust will be invested in UK equities, up to 30 per cent in high-yielding bonds, principally emerging market debt, and the remainder in international shares. Also on the invest-



ment trust income theme is a new Pep linked to the High Income trust run by Abtrust (0800 136 724) and a similar Pep tie-up from Exeter's High Income unit trust (01392 42144).

On a different tack, Guinness Flight (0345 564564) has launched a Dublin-based China fund, a sub-fund of the

group's Select umbrella fund. The Guinness Flight newcomer will be managed by Nerissa Lee from Hong Kong.

Hill Samuel (0800 336600) is offering its first investment trust based on UK Emerging Companies, with a market capitalisation of less than £100 million.

After a slow start, the number of groups launching new-style Venture Capital Trusts, which offer Pep-type tax breaks for investments held for five years, has increased quite dramatically. Among the latest to join the VCT club are Close Brothers (0171 426 4000); Gartmore (0800 212 433) and Hodgson Martin (0131 226 7644).

ROBERT MILLER AND JENNI PATTISON

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Edinburgh and DUNEDIN

announce their intention

to join forces.

Edinburgh Fund Managers Group plc and DFM Holdings Limited (Dunedin) have announced their intention to merge.* The new group will have over £8 billion under management and will include one of the UK's largest investment trust managers.

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- ◆ Edinburgh UK Smaller Companies Fund, Micropal 10 Year Unit Trust Award, 1992, 1993 and 1994^③

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- ◆ Dunedin Enterprise Investment Trust plc, 1st place, Five Years Investment Trust, Venture and Development Capital Sector, Micropal Awards 1994^④
- ◆ Dunedin Enterprise Investment Trust plc, Most Improved Investment Trust, Share of the Year, West Investment 1995^⑤

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*The merger is subject to certain conditions being met including regulatory and shareholder approval.

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Peps put into the spotlight

The Association of Investment Trust Companies, representing the interests of the investment trust industry, has updated and relaunched three of its fact-sheets. *Investment Trust PEPs* looks at the different types of personal equity plans available and explains the rules relating to investment trust Peps. The fact-sheet identifies the benefit in combining an investment trust, offering long-term performance and spread of risk, with a tax-free Pep. Although investment trusts for children may not seem an automatic choice, *Investing for Children* reveals their inherent advantages, including the absence of a front-end commission when carrying out the initial purchase. *Planning for School Fees* highlights the tax efficiency and flexibility of investment trusts over with-profits endowment policies when saving for education. These fact-sheets are available free from AJTC on 0171 431522.

■ Kilik & Co, the stockbroker, has produced a five-page guide to understanding Peps. The guide answers the questions most frequently asked by investors and explains in particular the benefits of unrestricted (self-selected) Peps versus "restricted" general and single company Peps. Questions answered include: "What does it cost to open a Pep?" and "Can more than one single company Pep be merged into one Pep?" A thousand copies of *A Guide to Understanding PEPs* are available. Contact Kilik & Co on 0171 4614400.

More than 90 per cent of road accident and work related personal injury claims are successful, according to the Solicitors' Trust, a national network of local solicitors that has produced the second in a series of fact-sheets on legal topics. *15 Facts you Need to Know about Personal Injury* includes claiming against medical negligence and compensation for victims of crime. Call 0990 11223.

■ Halifax Building Society has introduced new interest rates on its range of savings accounts. The new rate for a Liquid Gold account holder with £10,000 in his or her account is 3.60 per cent, compared with a previous return of 3.75 per cent. For a Bonus Gold saver with £10,000, the rate is now 5.25 per cent.

LIZZIE ROSE

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

	ANNUAL INCOME Rates as at February 14, 1996		
	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year	5,000	AIG Life	4.65
	10,000	AIG Life	4.75
	20,000	AIG Life	4.85
	50,000	AIG Life	5.00
2 Years	5,000	AIG Life	4.93
	10,000	AIG Life	5.03
	20,000	AIG Life	5.18
	50,000	AIG Life	5.33
3 Years	1,000	Premium Life	4.50
	5,000	AIG Life	5.02
	10,000	AIG Life	5.22
	20,000	AIG Life	5.33
	50,000	AIG Life	5.42
4 Years	1,000	Premium Life	4.70
	5,000	Fratcial Assmce	5.20
	10,000	Premium Life	5.50
	50,000	Premium Life	5.50
5 Years	1,000	Premium Life	5.10
	3,000	Pinnacle Insur	6.20

Source: Chamberlain de Broc 0171 434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Portman BS 01202 222444	Instant Acc	Instant	£100	4.80	Y/y
West Bromwich BS 0345 374121	Dir Instant	Postal	£2,000	6.00	A/Y/y
West Bromwich BS 0345 374121	Dir Instant	Postal	£25,000	6.25	A/Y/y
West Bromwich BS 0345 374121	Dir Instant	Postal	£50,000	6.50	A/Y/y

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Cheltenham & Gloucester 0500 246810	Direct 30	30 day p	£1,000	6.50	Y/y
Cheltenham & Gloucester 0500 246810	Direct 30	30 day p	£1,000	6.75	Y/y
Cheltenham & Gloucester 0500 246810	Direct 30	30 day p	£25,000	7.10	Y/y
Alliance & Leic BS 0116 271 7272	Prime 90 Depos	90 day	£100,000	7.20	Y/y

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Yorkshire BS 0800 378838		5 year	£9,000	7.30	F/Y/y
Allied Trust BS 0116 271 626079		5 year	£9,000	7.25	Y/y
Cheltenham & Gloucester 0500 717505		5 year	£33,000	7.25	Y/y
Principally BS 01222 344188		5 year	£25	7.25	Y/y

CREDIT CARDS' BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	Fee per annum
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	0.94%G	12.10%
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	1.00%	14.60%
Royal Bank of Scotland 0500 161616	MasterCard	1.14%	14.50%

NB = 2% bonus if account opened by 30/4/96. C = no interest free period. D = for debt consolidation only. E = Available to comprehensive motor insurance policy holders over 22 years. F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable). G = Annual rate 5% above R Reming base rate. OM denotes interest paid on maturity. P = By Post only

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

PERSONAL LOANS' BEST BUYS

PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3 yrs with insurance	no insurance
Direct Line 0141 2489966	14.90%E	£114.41	£102.59
Midland 0800 180180	15.40%	£116.54	£103.14
Abbey National 0345 545556	15.50%	£115.18	£103.26

NB = A = 2% bonus if account opened by 30/4/96. C = no interest free period. D = For debt consolidation only. E = Available to comprehensive motor insurance policy holders over 22 years. F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable). G = Annual rate 5% above R Reming base rate. OM denotes interest paid on maturity. P = By Post only

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01622 500 777)

Building Societies' Best Buys

Source: Building Societies' Best Buys (0171 501 0101)

PBS = Permanent Interest Bearing shares

Source: ABN AMRO Home Gove 0171 601 0101

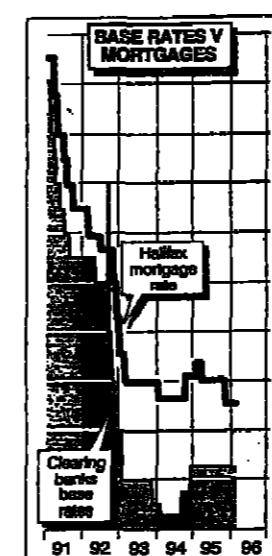
SHARE IN FOCUS: LLOYDS CHEMISTS ANOTHER BID EXPECTED?

Source: Lloyds Chemists 0171 222 4000

Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

500p 450p 400p 350p 300p 250p 200p 150p 100p 50p 20p 10p 5p

Source: Chamberlain de Broc 0171 434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.



Gas VAT rebate lost in the system



Sids need to be considered

From Mrs C. M. Behrmann
Sir, *The Times* of February 9 had an article entitled "More risk, less reward" in which it says: "Amazingly, BT still has 2.5 million shareholders content to see it underperform a rising stock market average indefinitely".

I am an 80-year-old Sid and I am not at all content.

Sids bought privatisation shares in the belief that the Government was selling them a fair investment so it would have been if BT had not suffered persistent punitive restrictions, hampering it at every turn.

Surely, competition now is global, not just little Britain, and as BT is Britain's telecommunications front-runner (though probably will not be permitted to be so much longer) the telecommunications regulator should be giving it assistance to compete worldwide, not as its "worst enemy", as *The Times* reported, assisting the likes of AT&T to undermine it.

And in the Office of Telecommunications' competition frenzy isn't it time some thought might be given to the shareholders?

Yours faithfully,
C. M. BEHRMANN,
57 Powys,
Sidmouth,
Devon.

bank. Two letters from me protesting about British Gas's action produced no reply, but a patient woman on the switchboard of British Gas in Edinburgh told me the mishap had occurred as a result of transferring accounts to a new computer system. Well, it would, wouldn't it? From her weary tone, I guessed that mine was just one of similar complaints. An "own goal" for Cedric Brown before his substitute takes over?

Yours faithfully,
PETER ORR,
17 Berkley Drive,
Guisborough, Cleveland.

From Mr Peter Orr
Sir. So farewell to Cedric Brown, who must surely rank high among the many overvalued players in the premier personnel league. Is it mere coincidence, I wonder, that his departure synchronises with the discovery of failure in the accounting system of British Gas? Some time ago, like many other people, I sought (quite legally, we were assured) to avoid VAT on my fuel bills by depositing in advance quite a large sum of money in my account with British Gas. Now, I am informed that the credit balance has been paid back into my

Pension clawback to be challenged

From Mr David Lindsay

Sir, Mrs Shrimmin (Weekend Money Letters, February 3) and others concerned at the "clawback" from unemployment benefit for occupational pensions over £3 per week now suffered by the over-55s — contrary to the principle of "no means test for contributory benefits" enshrined in the Beveridge scheme — may be interested to hear that, although only Parliament can wholly undo what it ought never to have done, Cespa (Campaign for Equal State

Pension Ages), fresh from its triumph in the prescription charge case, is looking into the feasibility of challenging the method of imposition of the clawback — also by reference to the "Equal Treatment Directive".

After all, setting the clawback age at 53 for both men and women means that men can suffer it for up to ten years, against five for women, and also that many more men than women are affected by it. Yours faithfully,

DAVID LINDSAY
(Legal Adviser for Cespa:
36 Orchard Combe,
Whitchurch Hill,
Reading).

Why it would pay to die on a Tuesday

From Mr T. Lomas

Sir, Mr Baird (Weekend Money Letters, February 10) need not despair. My 65th birthday this year also falls on a Tuesday but when I questioned the fairness of my entitlements-to-state-pension not beginning until the following Monday, I was told that in the week of my death I would be entitled to a full week's pension, whether I live a full week or not.

To take full advantage of this Mr Baird should arrange that when he eventually has to die he should die on a Tuesday, or at latest on a Monday after he has collected his pension, but the night before he dies he should have a whale of a night out on a full week's pension.

Yours faithfully,
T. LOMAS,
21 Clarence Road,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Premium Bond vigil

From Mr R. Jarvis
Sir, I often find it interesting to read that when Premium Bond winners are announced, National Savings also releases details of the number of bonds held by each winner.

What I should like to know is how long the winner has owned the bonds before being successful. Why you may ask? Because I have owned one bond since 1957! My optimism of being an eventual winner has cost me approximately £14 in lost interest! Am I just being reckless by continuing to be patient?

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD JARVIS,
14 Woodview Close,
Colchester.

Information for Weekend Money may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5082. Letters should include a daytime number. The Times asks that original documents are not sent in.

PERSONAL PENSIONS

Do you need a pension plan that's ready for life's unexpected turns?

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NAME (Mr/Mrs/Ms) _____

ADDRESS _____

Tel. (Office) _____

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Date of Birth _____



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You profit from our principles

When returns are far from friendly

Societies are facing criticism over their fees,
Caroline Merrell finds

Friendly societies aim their products at those who have very little spare income to save. Their plans allow people to invest up to £270 a year, or £25 a month, in a policy that is free from tax. However, over the past few years, as the life insurance industry has moved over to disclosing the true cost of their products, these provident institutions have come under fire for imposing high charges.

The anomaly between providing a product for the poor, but charging a lot of money for the privilege, was highlighted by Paddy Goodman, a reader of *The Times* from Scotland.

He was sent details of a ten-year savings plan from the Homeowners Friendly Society. In the marketing literature aimed at advertising the plan, Homeowners友 claims that an investor aged 45, saving £20.50 over a ten-year period would get back £2,580, assuming a growth rate of 6 per cent. Mr Goodman is incensed. He said: "My investment would be £2,460 over ten years, so at £2,680 my return is nearer to 1 per cent a year than 6 per cent."

And in the Office of Telecommunications' competition frenzy isn't it time some thought might be given to the shareholders?

Yours faithfully,

C. M. BEHRMANN,

57 Powys,

Sidmouth,

Devon.

that they will be getting a 6 per cent return on their modest investment."

The friendly society lists the charges on this product in the following way: a £6 per annum policy fee, an annual management charge of up to 0.235 per cent of the fund per annum, and a 5 per cent bid/offer spread on each investment.

Peter Stanford, Homeowners Friendly Society head of marketing, said: "The savings plan invests in the Great British Exempt fund, which in 1995 grew by 23.05 per cent including charges. With a period of low interest rates, this is a fairly healthy return. Performance depends on the growth in the market and the performance of our fund managers, which cannot be accurately forecast. The charges made on the policy may appear high, but they are not unreasonable, and are comparable with other societies".

A survey in next month's *Planned Savings*, the monthly trade magazine, found that the charges on friendly society products would cut the annual yield on some policies by as much as 5.9 per cent.

This means that even if the policy yielded a 10 per cent return, the charges would cut back this yield to 4 per cent.

The example HFS sent

£3,125.61 at the end of ten years, with no risk to capital.

Mr Goodman claims the illustration is misleading. He says: "There must be thousands and thousands of small savers who will go to their bed tonight in the mistaken belief

Doesn't a high return with immediate tax savings sound better than a TESSA?

NO INITIAL OR EXIT CHARGE
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If you want to achieve a high tax-free return, you needn't lock your money away in a TESSA for 5 years.

Producing some 7% gross, you do want to get to your money, there won't even be an exit charge.

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Important: Please print clearly. Print Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

TM 17/02/96

6 out of 6 funds are in the top 25% of their sectors for their performance over 5 years. Positions are to 1st February 1996 and are on an offer-to-offer US Dollar basis, inclusive of reinvested income, net of withholding taxes (source: Micropal). Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The value of an investment and the income from it can go down as well as up (this may partly be a result of exchange rate fluctuations) and you may not get back the amount invested.

THE TIMES OF INDIA



INVESTMENT
MANAGEMENT

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nision

Dull end to the week

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Stock	Company	Price	Yield	PE	High	Low	Change	PE												
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES																				
477 Allied Breweries	477 Allied Breweries	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
478 British Beer & Pub Co	478 British Beer & Pub Co	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
479 Carlsberg	479 Carlsberg	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
480 Heublein	480 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
481 Heublein	481 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
482 Heublein	482 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
483 Heublein	483 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
484 Heublein	484 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
485 Heublein	485 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
486 Heublein	486 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
487 Heublein	487 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
488 Heublein	488 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
489 Heublein	489 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
490 Heublein	490 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
491 Heublein	491 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
492 Heublein	492 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
493 Heublein	493 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
494 Heublein	494 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
495 Heublein	495 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
496 Heublein	496 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
497 Heublein	497 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
498 Heublein	498 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
499 Heublein	499 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
500 Heublein	500 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
501 Heublein	501 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
502 Heublein	502 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
503 Heublein	503 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
504 Heublein	504 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
505 Heublein	505 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
506 Heublein	506 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
507 Heublein	507 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
508 Heublein	508 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4
509 Heublein	509 Heublein	12.25	4.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25	12.25	-0.25	17.4	12.25							

Comfortable win for West Indies in opening World Cup match

Lara returns in crowd-pleasing style

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD (Zimbabwe won toss): West Indies (2pts) beat Zimbabwe by six wickets

BRIAN LARA entered the World Cup yesterday and the world took notice. Before a teeming full house of 27,000, with hundreds more watching from the roofs of neighbouring houses, he ensured that West Indies won their first match in the competition with an innings of such compressed power that it amounted to an unignorable statement of intent.

"No matter what you may have heard about me in the past six months," he seemed to say, "I will defend myself with the bat." He did just that yesterday, and West Indies can only benefit. A match that lacked distinction until his arrival took flight in the last hour.

If there was a happier man than Lara, while he was making an unbeaten 43, it was surely Wes Hall, the manager who has crossed swords with him, for, if Lara plays like this in the next month, West Indies may confound everyone's expectations.

Brief though his stay was, Lara positively dazzled on his return to the team after a fractious and well-chroniced winter. The crowd had waited all day to see him bat and did.

SCOREBOARD

ZIMBABWE									
*1 A Flower v Bresnehan Ambrose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Gibson v Gibson	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A D R Campbell runs out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A C Waller v Bresnehan Ambrose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
S G Davis runs out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
H M Streak v Strachan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
P J Pardoe v Gibson	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
E A Brondum v Chanderpal v Ambrose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A P Lock out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Edwards 10-12, 11-12, 11-13	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Total 150-10, 10-11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
FALL OF WICKETS 1-11, 2-12, 3-13, 4-14, 5-15, 6-16, 7-17, 8-18, 9-19, 10-20, 11-21, 12-22, 13-23, 14-24, 15-25, 16-26, 17-27, 18-28, 19-29, 20-30, 21-31, 22-32, 23-33, 24-34, 25-35, 26-36, 27-37, 28-38, 29-39, 30-40, 31-41, 32-42, 33-43, 34-44, 35-45, 36-46, 37-47, 38-48, 39-49, 40-50, 41-51, 42-52, 43-53, 44-54, 45-55, 46-56, 47-57, 48-58, 49-59, 50-60, 51-61, 52-62, 53-63, 54-64, 55-65, 56-66, 57-67, 58-68, 59-69, 60-70, 61-71, 62-72, 63-73, 64-74, 65-75, 66-76, 67-77, 68-78, 69-79, 70-80, 71-81, 72-82, 73-83, 74-84, 75-85, 76-86, 77-87, 78-88, 79-89, 80-90, 81-91, 82-92, 83-93, 84-94, 85-95, 86-96, 87-97, 88-98, 89-99, 90-100, 91-101, 92-102, 93-103, 94-104, 95-105, 96-106, 97-107, 98-108, 99-109, 100-110, 101-111, 102-112, 103-113, 104-114, 105-115, 106-116, 107-117, 108-118, 109-119, 110-120, 111-121, 112-122, 113-123, 114-124, 115-125, 116-126, 117-127, 118-128, 119-129, 120-130, 121-131, 122-132, 123-133, 124-134, 125-135, 126-136, 127-137, 128-138, 129-139, 130-140, 131-141, 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687-697, 688									

Vicompt De Valmont to lead the wise warriors

BY JULIAN MUSCAT

FORGET what remains of the Champion Horses, who trade on fleetness of foot. Dismiss the pampered chasers being gingerly pointed at the Cheltenham Gold Cup. It is a day of blood and thunder at Newcastle where 16 of the oldest, wisest warriors lock horns in the Tote Eider Chase over an extended four miles.

Let us marvel, for a moment, at these endangered dinosaurs; these stayers of extreme distances. Excepting Lord Relic and Captain Dibble, who have yet to run this term, the 14 remaining candidates have covered 188 miles this season alone.

They have jumped 1,128 fences — the equivalent to lapping Newcastle racecourse more than 100 times. Collectively, they have only suffered two falls — both by Into The Red, ironically a standing dash at Aintree. The key to their longevity must lie somewhere within these statistics.

Together with Another Ex-

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: STEEL MOSS
(1.50 Windsor)
Next best: Silver Stick
(4.10 Newcastle)

bully him at home. My wife rides him out but he spends most of the time turned out in his paddock."

Nicholls must be hoping his horse is on song, for the portents look promising. Vicompt De Valmont has been targeted at this race all season.

Together with Another Ex-

cellence, the Irish raider, he is the only horse with the benefit of an outing in the last four weeks. And the blinkers are dispensed with, as they were when the gelding finished strongly over an inadequate trip at Newbury seven days ago.

If that recent outing appears too close for comfort, Nicholls maintains that his charge seems to thrive on racing. "Four days after he ran badly at Warwick in January I thought to myself: 'Sod it, I'll send him out again at Taunton.' And he ran a blinder; his best of the season."

A decent run from Vicompt De Valmont would see him join his stablemate, Deep Bramble, in an assault on the Grand National. The Aintree executive yesterday announced it had advanced the time of this year's renewal, on March 30, from 3.45 to 3.00. The race is to be staged a week earlier than usual and consequently prior to British Summer Time. The off-time, which

has been changed to facilitate five transmission of the race around the globe, will revert to its traditional slot in 1997.

BBC cameras will be on site today at Chepstow, where the Persian War Premier Novices' Hurdle has attracted a competitive entry. Wisley Wonder has won his last five starts and he should make this a true test of stamina.

Among those queuing up to challenge him will be Frontager, Lake Kariba, Whatahab and Zephyrus. But the most potent of his rivals could be Jet Rules, a good winner at Kempton. This improving customer should find conditions to his liking.

In the continuing and tedious battle over sponsorship sites, George Ward, chairman of Tripleprint, announced his company will not renew its support of the Easter and Masaka Stakes at Kempton. Also under threat is the firm's backing of the King George VI Chase meeting and a plethora of races on the Flat.



Cuddy Dale soared over the last fence at Sandown yesterday, but failed to contain Arthur's Minstrel

Easby Joker can have last laugh

CHEPSTOW
BBC1

1.00: See above.

1.30: Harwell Lad, not one to trust implicitly, should still prove too strong for his three opponents. He dominated a better contest from the front before tiring in the straight at Ascot last month and will not be inconvenienced by dropping back in distance. Bond Jnr made mistakes when pulled up at Ascot on Wednesday and his stable companion, Bramblehill Buck, looks a better forecast prospect.

2.00: Killone Abbot will be popular now that he reverts to this trip. He romped through similar ground at Newbury in November and looks sure to go close. However, Hops And Pops, very much at home on this track, will also cope with the conditions and her front-running antics could pay dividends.

The mare, who blundered her way out of a competitive Sandown event last week, is marginally out of the handicap, but that is largely offset by the value of Richard Johnson's claim. Mudhaim is not out of it with his big weight. Thinking Twice had Sobrah behind him last time but is best on a sound surface.

NEWCASTLE

CHANNEL 4

3.00: Strong Deal, who had Gnome's Tycoon in arrears, showed improved form on his



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

last outing. Nevertheless, he was well behind Easby Joker when the latter tumbled at the last at Wetherby last month. The selection's fencing is not foot-perfect but these obstacles should not unduly tax him, and he is on a handy mark. Northants is untroubled by alternating between fences and hurdles but may appreciate a stiffer test of his mettle.

3.35: States should be kept to a minimum here. Circus Line, General Jimbo, Courteous and Heri Comes Herbie are not without ability but Charity Crusader had some decent, albeit distant, form on the Flat. He should progress for his hurdles debut last week.

4.05: See above.

4.40: Mary Revey complicates the issue by saddling three runners. Turnpikes has been impressive in two outings but all his form — including his efforts on the Flat — has come on a sound surface. Bonanza and Windy Lady have long absences to overcome but the latter, who ran well on her reappearance last season, will relish these testing conditions.

The mare is narrowly preferred to Sparky Gayle, who jumped hesitantly when narrowly beaten at Haydock last time. Ivy House's chance is hard to evaluate, although he ran with credit when returned to hurdles last time out. The ground may be too soft for Golden Hello and The Last Fling, while Native Field is a difficult ride.

JULIAN MUSCAT

NEWCASTLE

THUNDERER

1.25 Go-Informal 3.00 Deep Decision
1.55 The Grey Monk 3.35 Circus Line
2.30 Rue Ros 4.10 Gold Cap
4.40 SPARKY GAYLE (nap)

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 4.40 THE LAST FLING.

GOING SOFT (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

1.25 LEVY BOARD NOVICES HURDLE (£2,789: 2m 4f) (22 runners)

101 414 CAMPAIGN 33 (Ireland) Specimen M 5-11-10 D Brindizer
102 1212-51 GO-INFORMAL 81 (I.C.D.) M Marshall J. Jefferson 5-11-10 M Dwyer
103 NAUGHTY FUTURE 19 (I.G.S.) A Callen J. O'Neill 7-11-10 A Roche (3)
104 5 HOWLYWOOD 83 (R) (Bawden) J. Johnson 5-11-10 B Hartley (3)
105 4 MARBLE MAN 32 (I.O.) Lever M Hamond 6-11-10 Mr C Bonner (3)
106 114- MAESTRA NOVA 53 (M) (Matthews Breeding and Racing) M Carrasco 6-11-10 P. Meen
107 120-200 25 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-11-10 N. Smith
108 4 MARBLE MAN 32 (I.O.) Lever M Hamond 6-11-10 J. Callaghan (3)
109 1205-51 PEBBLE BEACH 77 (P) (Longstaff) G. Moore 6-11-10 D. Byrne
110 327/ PHILHARMONIC 16 (I.O.) (P. Longstaff) G. Moore 6-11-10 R. McNamee (3)
111 106-200 25 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-11-10 S. Taylor (7)
112 1205-51 25 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-11-10 P. Meen
113 106-200 25 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-11-10 R. McNamee (3)
114- THE OTHER MAN 32 (I.O.) (Gordon Stagg) L. Sallie 6-11-10 S. McHugh (3)
115 110-200 25 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-11-10 D. Bradley
116 111- HARDEMAN 64 (I.O.) (K. Penman) G. Moore 6-11-10 P. Meen
117 111- HANDAMAN 64 (I.O.) (K. Penman) G. Moore 6-11-10 P. Meen
118 111- HOTSPUR STREET 14/15 (S) (Carruthers M. Eccles 6-11-10 J. Callaghan (3)
119 OU KEMO SABO 7 (R) (Nichols) C. Parke 6-10-7
120 RED SPOTACLE 32 (I.O.) (D. Morgan) P. Hadden 6-10-7
121 5463-51 SPARKY GAYLE 16 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-10-7
122 106-200 25 (I.O.) (L. & J. P. Meen) 6-10-7
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Che lives among treasured elite of keepers of noble art

**SIMON
BARNES**

On Saturday

Darts Organisation (BDO) is launching a campaign to change all this. Under the brilliant acronym of DARTS

— Darts: As a Recognised True Sport — the BDO will campaign for its right and proper place in sporting life. Oly' Craft, the BDO general secretary, said: "The Sports Council dismisses darts as a pastime, while recognising clay-pigeon shooting, fishing, pool and synchronised swimming as sports. The BDO is not saying that these sports do not deserve recognition, but surely a non-contact sport like darts, which provides equal opportunities for men and women, is enjoyed by the disabled and the blind, and in which we rule the world."

It's a message from the darts lobby.



Hastings Gardens, That was to be the name of a new housing development near Murrayfield, the Scottish rugby union ground. The development coincided with the decision of the renowned Scot-

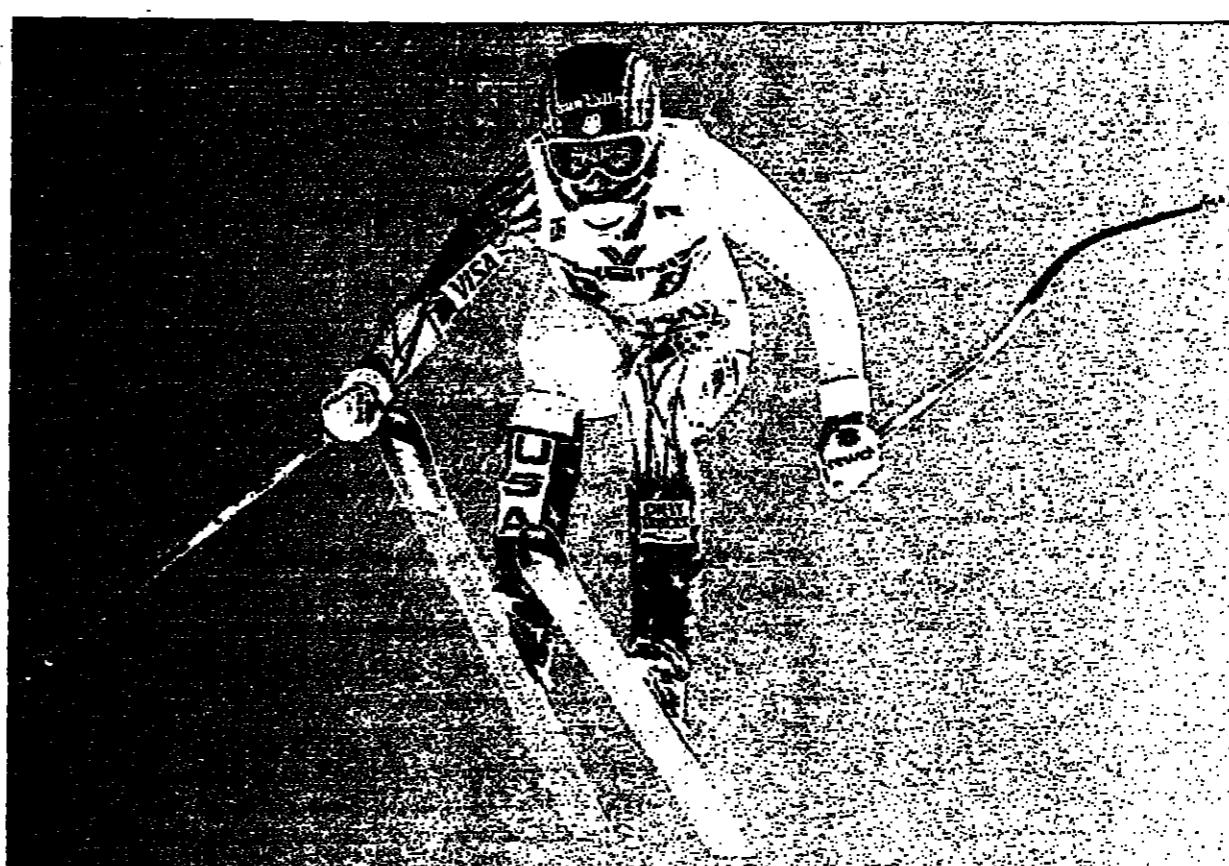
land captain to retire; but, alas, Edinburgh District Council is likely to veto the name. Its objection: Hastings is insufficiently dead.

Court out

David Letterman, the American late-night talk show host, found the sight of an overweight woman dribbling peach juice at the US Open tennis championships irresistibly amusing. Letterman used the clip of this unfortunate moment as a running gag, referring to her as "a seductive temptress". Audiences howled with laughter, but not Jane Bernstein, the lady in question. She suffers from a thyroid complaint, has had polio, and has suffered two spinal fusion operations — and she is suing Letterman for invasion of privacy.

Last laugh

Greetings to Lamine Gueye, of Senegal, the only skier in a country notably short on mountains, let alone snow, who marched in the opening ceremony of the Alpine skiing world championships last Sunday. Not alone. With him was Alberto Storti, an Italian comic in black-face, wearing a curly wig. "I think the world could do with a sense of humour," Gueye said. Not so the Senegalese sports ministry, which is considering withdrawing Gueye's licence to represent the country. Gueye pays all his own expenses to compete, raced at the 1984 and 1992 Winter Olympics, and is a tremendously consistent performer. Always last.



Picabo Street, of the United States, is flying high in the Alpine skiing world championships. After a bronze medal in the super-giant slalom, she won the downhill section of the combined event yesterday. Results, page 51

Thomson masters spirited Kerkow

By GORDON ALLAN

ANDY THOMSON, of England, champion for the past two years, advanced to the last 16 of the Churchill Insurance world indoor bowls championships singles with a 7-5, 7-6, 7-5 win over Kelvin Kerkow, of Australia, at the Preston Guild Hall yesterday. He plays David Corkill, of Ireland, on Tuesday.

Thomson had anticipated a testing match and got it. After taking the first set, he dropped

four shots on the second end of the second set and went 6-0 down; but, as he said later, he forced himself to stick at it, and duly edged two sets in front.

The final set lasted 11 ends. Both players saved set ties. Kerkow managed to come in with saving bowls or kill ends several times before Thomson claimed the shot that mattered: "I think something different early on and changed to long jacks," Thomson said. "It seemed to

about the future of women in this event; since they were introduced last year, they have not won a match.

The World Bowls Players' Association, at its annual meeting at Preston, has changed its name to the Professional Bowlers' Association and proposed the formation of a new body to develop a World Bowls Tour, similar to that in golf, which would operate with 12 annual events.

Results, page 51

Pointed argument

has always baffled this column that archery and rifle shooting — sports that require skill rather than movement, cold nerve rather than inspiration — should be in the Olympic Games, while arts not recognised as a sport at all, at least, not in this country. However, the British

Foley fears sprint finish

BY OUR IRISH RACING CORRESPONDENT

DANOLI faces just three opponents in today's Red Mills hurdle at Gowran Park, and while on form he is in a different class to them, his trainer, Tom Foley, is anxious that the race does not turn into a sprint.

Foley said yesterday: "I don't want a slow-run race but it looks like the others will be in behind and wait, which won't suit us. Danoli is a horse that doesn't do a lot in the lead; he won't go 20 or 30 lengths in front but if he's able to race in third he really takes hold."

"I want a real race at Gowran. It would be ideal if a front-runner like Myself was in it, because she would make the race and give Danoli the sort of test he'll get in the Champion."

Anything but a comfortable success for Danoli, despite Foley's other concern about the very soft ground, will be a surprise.

WARRIOR

HUNTER

40 Tejano Gold, 2.10 Sticky Money, 2.45 Air Shot, 1.61 Ebulent Equine, 3.50 River Losse, 4.25 he Frog Prince, 4.55 Royalfino.

ONG: GOOD TO SOFT

The most dangerous of Danoli's three opponents is likely to be the former top novice, Tiaanissen Square, who has switched this season from Noel Meade to Aidan O'Brien's thriving yard. He was returning from a long lay-off when third to Derryymoyle at Punchestown recently.

O'Brien, however, does not see a possible slow gallop suiting his charge. He said: "Our horse is a Stayers' Hurdle horse, while Danoli is a Champion. Hurdle contender, so if they go a walk we have no chance. Tiaanissen Square just stays. I just hope he gives a good account of himself."

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3 129 DIVERTIMENTO 14 (S) J Hobbs 5-1-8... E Husband
2 210 BO FAR GOLD 25 (S) G Hobbs 5-1-10... L Wynn
3 420 TEJANO GOLD 14 (S) P Slevin 5-1-15... P Cawley
4 551 KING ATHLETIC 29 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh
5 712 STAYERS' HURDLE 14 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh
6 822 RICA LIFE 30 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh
7 046 PETTLEWELL 23 (S) D Burchell 5-10-11... D O'Brien
8 426 TWICE AS NICE 25 (S) F Murphy 5-10-11... F Murphy
9 252 RUMBLE 25 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh
10 392 RUMBLE 25 (S) F Murphy 5-10-11... A Pugh
11 626 GOLDEN 26 (S) F Murphy 5-10-11... A Pugh
12 702 ONE TO NOTE 36 (S) M Monger 5-12-15... M Molloy (7)
1 King Atkinson, 8-2 Deller, 8-1 Fijian Gold, Rich Lite, 8-1 Ebulent Equine, 10-1 Tejano Gold, 10-1 Sticky Money.

3 104 BANBURY HANDICAP HURDLE (26,451; 2m 4f 110yds) (20)

1 210 ENDLESS ECHO 19 (S) D McNeice 6-2-9... S McNeice
2 400 MARSH GOLD 25 (S) J Scuderi 6-1-10... L Wynn
3 420 TEJANO GOLD 14 (S) P Slevin 5-1-15... P Cawley
4 551 KING ATHLETIC 29 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh
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1 King Atkinson, 8-2 Deller, 8-1 Fijian Gold, Rich Lite, 8-1 Ebulent Equine, 10-1 Tejano Gold, 10-1 Sticky Money.

2 10 STUDLEY HANDICAP HURDLE (22,829; 2m 4f 110yds) (20)

1 210 ENDLESS ECHO 19 (S) D McNeice 6-2-9... S McNeice

2 400 MARSH GOLD 25 (S) J Scuderi 6-1-10... L Wynn

3 420 TEJANO GOLD 14 (S) P Slevin 5-1-15... P Cawley

4 551 KING ATHLETIC 29 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh

5 712 STAYERS' HURDLE 14 (S) Mr D Jones 5-1-15... A Pugh

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1 King Atkinson, 8-2 Deller, 8-1 Fijian Gold, Rich Lite, 8-1 Ebulent Equine, 10-1 Tejano Gold, 10-1 Sticky Money.

2 45 KINGMAKER NOVICES CHASE (Grade II; £11,900; 2m) (4)

1 012 AIR SHOT 26 (S) D McNeice 6-1-15... A Pugh

2 231 ARCTIC KRISMAN 39 (S) N T Davies 5-1-15... G Lupton

3 406 BARBARIC FUGITIVE 20 (S) P Molter 5-1-15... T Horgan

4 203 SUBIE DASHING 37 (S) P Molter 5-1-15... T Horgan

5 446 ARCHAIC 21 A1 Sire, 5-2 Subbie Fallow, 8-1 Gambler's Delight

6 451 COLOSSUS IN CHIEF 58 (S) P Murphy 5-1-12... L Wynn

7 111 SIMPLY DASHING 37 (S) P Murphy 5-1-12... L Wynn

8 111 SIMPLY DASHING 37 (S) P Murphy 5-1-12... L Wynn

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42 446 ARCHAIC 21 A1 Sire, 5-2 Subbie Fallow, 8-1 Gambler's Delight

43 446 ARCHAIC 21 A1 Sire, 5-2 Subbie Fallow, 8-1 Gambler's Delight

Simple man who was simply the best

Paisley's greatest asset was gift of the common touch

The scene would have appealed to Bob Paisley's wry humour. Most of English and Welsh football will fall silent this afternoon, but at Gay Meadow, a ground where the tribute should be particularly keen, the kick-off is not until 11am tomorrow, and the majority of the 8,000 people present will hope to see his beloved Liverpool humbled by Shrewsbury Town in the FA Cup.

Sunday, to Paisley, was indeed the silent day, the last day in the old football week.

This Weekend View is largely given in his words because Paisley knew the game better than any of us and could impart more knowledge in a half-finished sentence than many a modern media manager in a lifetime. It was a February afternoon at Anfield in 1982 when Paisley, then 63, stared several hours in the boardroom with me in the company of Sir John Smith, the late chairman, and Peter Robinson, the surviving secretary.

Paisley was already Great Britain's most successful manager, but a prescient critic of the FA coaching doctrine and, like Bill Shankly before him and Roy Evans after him, a man who had spent a minimum of 25 years in apprenticeship to become team manager.

"Sharing," he said, "sums up Liverpool better than anything else. I don't think I could have survived at any other club, because here I can go from the top to the bottom, talk to people."

"This is probably why I've been able to accept the burden that's apparently on me. I've been able to get knowledge and comfort, so it's not been as lonely as it is at any other club."

The ego that drives so much of football was another target of Paisley. "There's so many clubs been ruined by people's ego," he said. "The day after we won our first European Cup, we were back at this club at 9.15 in the morning talking about how we would do it again, working from that moment because nobody has the right to win anything they haven't earned."

"I talked to the chairman and Peter [Robinson] about a player we wanted. He asked for a wage that would have broken our pay structure. The chairman and Peter said it would overload us, so I went along with that idea. If I didn't, if I tried to insist on improving the team, I would be putting my ego above



ROB HUGHES
Weekend View

everything else. That's another thing at Liverpool, we accept it as it is."

Paisley believed that he was a more competitive man than Shankly. He knew that he could not command words or an audience the way Shankly did, yet he had been widely quoted as disparaging Arsenal's style. "There's method in my madness," he said. "When we met last, it was like two brothers who were not compatible. So I'm having a little go at them, because I'm

shrewdness in medical matters. He had been the trainer (the old sponge man) and had taken a course in physiotherapy and he seemed to spot a stress injury before the player even realised it was developing. "A manager's got to have something, it doesn't matter what," he said. "He's got to be able to hold the respect of players, and initially I was able to hit the area where they were weakest and gain respect that way."

"I find out more about a player when he's injured. However much you try to involve him, he seems an outcast. It's got to be that way, you've got to concentrate on the fit ones; but you see the reaction, the character, when a player is down. You can help him, but he reveals himself."

He knew the mind of the Kop, too. "The whole of my life, what they wanted was honesty," he said. "They were not so concerned with cultured football, but with tries who give 100 per cent."

Paisley owned up to his simple psychology inside his own dressing room:

"You've got to know of the fitness of people, you've got to know that, if you put

youngsters in there, that they have the nature to withstand it," he said. "Otherwise, the senior players will treat them like lap dogs. Things are changing in the game. Before, we've had two substitutes lying spare ... with the wages that are coming in, you are going to have smaller squads with only three or four men to cover 11 positions."

He had expected to be a stopgap manager, but those thinking that early retirement was on his agenda were misled.

The boardroom rocked with laughter at the man's canny ways.

"I'd be better off financially

looking forward as far as April, hoping they'll be so naked, they'll bypass midfield and open up the game a little bit."

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OLD WARRIORS SET
TO LOCK HORNS
IN EIDER CHASE

SPORT

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

Victory over Wales promises to bring unlikely grand slam a step nearer

Scotland looking back to the future

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

NOT the least of Scotland's achievements this season has been to leap from being a lost cause in rugby union's five-nations' championship to potential grand slam champions. To span such a chasm in four weeks suggests that the truth always lay somewhere in their disposal.

"Spectators have to be satisfied with good performances," Telfer said. "Entertainment is part and parcel of how you want to play the game. We have always tried to play constructive rugby with limited resources and sometimes with meagre ball."

Telfer genuinely respects the Welsh system that produces such competitive players from school and youth rugby. Against that, he set the commitment and dedication that Scotland's national teams seem to have bottled as a speciality. "We have always had players who miss out on the accolades, players like Alastair Campbell or Chris Gray, for example, and now Stuart Campbell," Telfer said.

"These are players who have taken it upon themselves to make their mark in rugby, but I am surprised how quickly this group has gelled together with no apparent concern. At the moment, we have 15 blokes who are not world-class but are working very hard to prove the doubters wrong."

Some of the cement in Scotland's game will be provided by Scott Hastings, who wins his sixtieth cap and stands one behind Gavin, his brother, in Scotland's all-time list. Scott is 31, but, according to Telfer, persists in behaving as though he were 21 with his whole career stretching before him. "To remain an international for ten years is a remarkable achievement," Telfer said.

"You have to be lucky with injuries and remarkably resilient, but, apart from his skills and commitment, which have always made him a key member of the team, Scott remains a wonderful enthusiast, a very positive influence on the rest of the squad."

Wales' young and inexperienced unit, having carried the game so successfully to England that they lost by only six points, will look for more of the same in front of a supportive crowd — though that has not stopped them attending to some basics.

They have worked hard on their scrummaging, doubtless in the hope that the Scotland back row can be tied down and also on their rucking. No side in the northern hemi-



Arwel Thomas, of Wales, is the centre of attention in training for the game with Scotland today. Photograph: Huw Evans

sphere produces quicker ball than Scotland, yet that is exactly what Wales require so that they can release their young backs.

"We made mistakes against England which cost us two tries," Jonathan Humphreys, the Wales hooker and captain, said, "but you learn a lot from each game, about yourself and how the game can be played, and we know that the style we are after does work. Some people have questioned whether it can work at the top level — well, New Zealand and Scotland have proved it."

Nevertheless, the stakes have changed in a subtle way since the last round of the championship, two weeks ago. Every game that Scotland win produces a greater degree of expectation and a more searching examination of individuals, such as Gregor

Townsend, the adventurous stand-off half, or Rowan Shepherd, whose glorious running against France provoked a mass of laudatory adjectives.

Yet there is a buoyancy in Wales, an expectation that if the season is to mean anything, it must start with a home victory. The series with Scotland — this is the hundredth meeting of the countries and Wales lead 54-43 — has no burden attached, unlike recent games with Ireland, who have relished visits to Cardiff.

The only tradition fixed to this game is one of running rugby, which may not be easy to sustain if the weather lives up to forecasts of wind and rain. Yet the Scots shrugged off such handicaps in Dublin, took a positive attitude and won. What they have done once, they can do again.

WALES

W.J.L. Thomas (Llanelli)	15	R.J.S. Shepherd (Melrose)	9
I.C. Evans (Llanelli)	14	C.A. Reeser (Melrose)	8
L.B. Davies (Neath)	13	S. Hastings (Watsonians)	7
N.G. Davies (Llanelli)	12	I.C. Jardine (Stringent County)	6
W.T. Proctor (Llanelli)	11	M. Dods (Northampton)	5
A.C. Thomas (Bristol)	10	G.P.J. Townend (Northampton)	4
R. Howley (Bridgend)	9	B.W. Redpath (Melrose)	3
A.L.P. Lewis (Cardiff)	8	D.I.W. Hilton (Bath)	2
J.M. Humphreys (Cardiff)	7	K.D. McKenzie (Stringent County)	1
J.D. Davies (Neath)	6	P.H. Wright (Boroughmuir)	0
E.W. Lewis (Cardiff)	5	R.I. Wallington (Watsonians)	0
G.O. Lewellyn (Neath)	4	S.J. Campbell (Dundee HSPF)	0
D. Jones (Cardiff)	3	G.W. Web (Newcastle)	0
H.G. Jones (Llanelli)	2	I.F. Smith (Glocester)	0
H.T. Taylor (Cardiff)	1	E.W. Peters (Bath)	0

RELEASER: J. Dumé (France) TV: BBC1
REPLACEMENTS: 16 G. Thomas (Bridgend), 17 N.R. Jenkins (Pontypridd), 18 A.P. Moore (Cardiff), 19 S. Williams (Neath), 20 L. Musgrove (Cardiff), 21 G.R. Jenkins (Swansea).

Referee: J. Dumé (France) TV: BBC1
REPLACEMENTS: 16 G. Thomas (Bridgend), 17 N.R. Jenkins (Pontypridd), 18 A.P. Moore (Cardiff), 19 S. Williams (Neath), 20 L. Musgrove (Cardiff), 21 G.R. Jenkins (Swansea).

SCOTLAND

15 R.J.S. Shepherd (Melrose)	16 G. Armstrong (Malvern)
14 C.A. Reeser (Melrose)	17 G. Armstrong (Newcastle)
13 S. Hastings (Watsonians)	18 G. Murray (Edinburgh Academicals)
12 I.C. Jardine (Stringent County)	19 A.P. Burnell (London Scottish)
11 M. Dods (Northampton)	20 J.A. Hay (Hawick)
10 G.P.J. Townend (Northampton)	21 J.A. Hay (Hawick)
9 B.W. Redpath (Melrose)	22 G. Armstrong (Malvern)
8 D.I.W. Hilton (Bath)	23 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
7 K.D. McKenzie (Stringent County)	24 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
6 P.H. Wright (Boroughmuir)	25 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
5 R.I. Wallington (Watsonians)	26 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
4 S.J. Campbell (Dundee HSPF)	27 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
3 G.W. Web (Newcastle)	28 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
2 I.F. Smith (Glocester)	29 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)
1 E.W. Peters (Bath)	30 G. Armstrong (Edinburgh Academicals)

Kick-off: 3.00 * denotes captain
REPLACEMENTS: 16 G. Thomas (Bridgend), 17 N.R. Jenkins (Pontypridd), 18 A.P. Moore (Cardiff), 19 S. Williams (Neath), 20 L. Musgrove (Cardiff), 21 G.R. Jenkins (Swansea).

Referee: J. Dumé (France) TV: BBC1
REPLACEMENTS: 16 G. Thomas (Bridgend), 17 N.R. Jenkins (Pontypridd), 18 A.P. Moore (Cardiff), 19 S. Williams (Neath), 20 L. Musgrove (Cardiff), 21 G.R. Jenkins (Swansea).

FIVE NATIONS'



RESULTS: France 15, England 12, Ireland 10, Scotland 16, England 21, Wales 15, Scotland 19, France 14.
PICTURES: Today: France v Ireland, Wales v Scotland, Scotland v England; Mar 16: England v Ireland, Wales v France

leaves. "I can't see why Scotland should be favourites," he grumbled at Beachley yesterday as his players trained at the Royal Welch Fusiliers ground under the shadow of the Severn Bridge. Nor that Telfer, who has a gleam in his eyes, ever set much store by the public perception of his team.

Yet wins over Ireland and France have made Scotland the only unbeaten team in the championship, playing, moreover, in the style that England have looked about but singularly failed to match. Nor have France and Ireland, who meet in Paris today, discovered such rapturous freedom of expression that Wales seek to emulate.

If you accept all the predictions, the match in Cardiff today will be redolent with

evening, there was an unshaven weariness to the team impossible to censure. Jack Russell sketched a drawing of a fellow passenger, Robin Smith scanned the business pages of a newspaper with entrepreneurial interest and Peter Martin, an avid photographer, fretted about batteries for his camera. Others stared ahead, unable to comprehend that this marathon could be inflicted in what is allegedly cricket's global event.

Perhaps we should not be surprised. The organisation of this tournament has, after all, been anything but slick and it is daily being condemned by a bickering backbench. Yesterday, it came in the shape of a dispute over sponsorship rights between Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola, renewed safety fears about the Calcutta ground that could affect the staging of the semi-final, and a protest from the Pakistani Government, claiming that the disputed territory of Kashmir was depicted as Indian at the opening ceremony. Amid such bedlam, the logistics of civilised travel for the competing teams seems to have been forgotten.

England, at least, can now settle in one base for a complete week and, within it, they GROUP A

RESULT: West Indies beat Zimbabwe by 6 wickets. Hyderabadi.

P	W	T	L	N.R.	Pts
West Indies	1	0	0	0	0
Zimbabwe	0	0	0	1	0
India	0	0	0	0	0
Kenya	0	0	0	0	0
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0
England	0	0	0	0	0
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0

GROUP B

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

should ensure their passage to the quarter-finals. The UAE, a sensible amalgam of seven Emirates, certain of whom have been falling out spectacularly in their cricket administration, won the ICC Trophy last year without losing a game. That was a surprise. If they so much as trouble England tomorrow, it will rank as the greatest upset in World Cup history.

They are an appealing curi-

osity, however, not least in the style of Sultan Zaravani, their captain, whose leg spin is said to be less impressive than his Lamborghini. Yet despite rigorous preparation that has taken them to one-day tournaments in Sharjah, India and Pakistan in recent months, they are genuine also-rans in an event with a sharp division between those who might win the trophy and those who cannot.

It could cynically be said that England have yet to prove to which camp they belong and their crop of minor injuries — of a type they were spared for most of the tour to South Africa — is worrying evidence of tired bodies. Michael Atherton, the captain, was yesterday grimacing with pain from his recurrent back condition, an addition to the concern already circulating over Hick, Robin Smith and Dominic Cork.

It is, however, Atherton's intention that Hick should play tomorrow and that England should field their best available team. In his mind, this may only involve substituting DeFreitas for Martin, but the option of including both specialist spin bowlers must be investigated.

Against New Zealand, it

was the spin of Hick and Richard Illingworth that stalled the opposition sprint. The two slow bowlers took three for 66 in 19 overs, as against two for 157 in 31 overs of seam. On the pitch dominating this tournament, Neil Smith's addition to the spin attack should not be long

delayed.

QUARTER-FINALS: Mar 9: AUS v SA, Durban; Mar 11: NZ v Eng, London; Mar 13: Eng v SA, London; Mar 14: Eng v NZ, London; Mar 15: Eng v SA, Cape Town; Mar 16: NZ v Eng, London.

SEMIFINAL: Mar 17: Eng v NZ, London.

FINAL: Mar 19: Eng v NZ, London.

SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIP: Mar 17: Eng v NZ, London.

WORLD CUP DETAILS:

GROUP A

RESULTS: West Indies beat Zimbabwe by 6 wickets. Hyderabadi.

GROUP B

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP C

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP D

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP E

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GROUP F

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GROUP G

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GROUP H

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP I

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP J

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP K

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP L

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GROUP M

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GROUP N

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GROUP O

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP P

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP Q

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP R

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs. Australia beat South Africa by 162 runs.

GROUP S

SIMON BARNES
IN PRAISE OF
THE GOALKEEPER
AND THE REVOLUTION
Redknapp
chamstring
uses conce
r Liverpool

TRAVEL

Burma:
aboard
the new
boat from
Mandalay

Page 18

PLUS: Spain for
artists, page 21

OFFERS

£10,000 of
British
weekend
breaks
to be won

Page 24

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cutlery offer, page 13

GARDENING

A rose
garden in
Belgium
fit for
a prince

Page 5

PLUS: the season for
snowdrops, page 4

BOOKS

Pretty Boy
Floyd
gets too
long a
stretch

Page 6

PLUS: children's
books, page 7

WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

THE STING IN THE CLINTONS' TALE



By Peter Stothard

Four years ago this weekend I was a "scorp" in New Hampshire. I was not a powerful "big-foot scorp" nor even a favoured "small-city scorp" but still a scorpion, a reporter, with a mild sting in my tail, covering the rise of Bill Clinton.

The two biggest stories of that time have almost faded from memory now. Jennifer Flowers, the blonde who claimed that Clinton was her lover and had listening-impaired tapes to prove it, is now just a footnote in the dictionaries of oddly-spelt girls' names. The then explosive allegation that Clinton dodged the Vietnam draft has been defused by repetition: it is used today only by the most rebarbative Republicans.

But, while the known facts of the last New Hampshire primary election may have died, the facts-behind-the-facts are back. They form the central events of *Primary Colors*, a cult novel of campaign sex (qualitatively different, it is said, from any other kind), campaign intrigue (peculiarly impersonal and careless) and campaign banter between husband and wife ("he could be a great man," said the would-be First Lady without looking at her husband, "if he weren't such a faithless, thoughtless, disorganized, undisciplined shit").

The book is by Anonymous. Washingtonians spend much of their time these days wondering who Anonymous is. What they know is that it can only have been written by someone with sources very, very close to Mr and Mrs Clinton in New Hampshire, Arkansas and New York in 1992.

We foreign journalists play traditionally little part in the electoral machine which is now, once again, roaring across the snow of north eastern America. So we do not feature much in *Primary Colors*. The only reference in the book to a non-American scorp is to a Swedish television crew whose visibility at a campaign event is a clear sign to insiders that the real story has moved on.

But we were certainly there in New Hampshire '92 in Bill Clinton's case we had been there in full British force before all the American papers. In the headquarters of Media Inc it took a long time for the cent to drop that a Governor of backward Arkansas might win the Democratic nomination over the favourite sons of Massachusetts, California and New York.

We were interested in Bill Clinton because Bill Clinton knew Britain. He had studied at Oxford. And he gave "full ear", as Anonymous puts it in his particular and linguistically pungent style.

In the early days of the campaign Clinton listened and talked even to scorpions whose stings could not hurt him and whose support was of almost no use. He had few "vols" to get between us and him. The busloads of volunteering Friends of Bill did not show up until the battle was nearly won.

There was always a small scattering of "muffins", the mostly female college students who pursue the hot candidate like camp-followers of a victorious army. But the candidate himself was often virtually alone, sometimes seeming to rehearse to us the few lines about foreign policy which occasionally crept into his speeches.

Our reporters' lives were ruled by campaign gossip. But we did not suspect one half of what Anonymous describes now. The only time that the fictional Governor Jack Stanton mentions Russia in New Hampshire is to buy off a blackmailing Lithuanian bus-driver who wants to spill some sexual harassment beans to the local pencils. (NOTE: all pencils are scorpions but not all scorpions, who include television reporters, are pencils.)

The Governor in the novel also has to find time to appease Fat Willie, the Arkansas barbecue-man whose backward daughter is a quickie gubernatorial conquest on the trail-side. The campaign sexual order, it seems, is that strategist "bake" muffins, the candidate bakes anything in a skirt that moves (including the prim librarian on a stop-by at an adult-literacy programme) and the narrator, Stanton's deputy campaign boss, bakes Daisie the spin-doctor (but it is only campaign sex, cosy, comforting, cold-ridden: the real thing has to wait until

Continued on page 3, col 1

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CHOICE

Planning to see a show or a film, an exhibition or a concert? *The Times* critics select the best entertainment

THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

EAST LYNNE Stage adaptations of Mrs Henry Wood's bestseller were as common in Victorian times as vampires in Transylvania, thanks to the sensationalism of her tale of the errant wife who returns home disguised as her son's governess, only to witness his death from TB. But Lisa Evans's new version ditched lines such as "dead, and never called me Mother!", replaces antique melodrama with a surprising amount of human truth, and with only a little tampering of the original evidence, gives a modern slant to what is already a chilling portrait of sexism in action. Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, London SE10 (0181-888 7759). Evenings: Mon to Sat, 7.45pm; matinee: Saturday at 2.30pm. **Q**

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC With *Company* soon to move from the Donmar to the West End, Stephen Sondheim's disenchanted views about marriage are about as fully represented in London as they could be. *Night Music* brings wit and insight to frigidity, infidelity and other subjects seldom tackled by big musicals, and Sean Mathias's lavish production adds plenty of feeling, best represented by Judi Dench's transformation of *Sondra in the Clowns* from a cynical dirge into a passionate lament for emotional loss and failure. Olivier, National, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-928 2252). Evenings: Thur 22 to Sat 24, 7.15pm; matinee: Sat 24, 2pm. Continues in repertoire. **Q**

JAZZ

Clive Davis

CLEO LAINE Hearing her wrap Dave Frishberg's satirical gem *Pearl Me a Grape* in her fruity vowels is one good reason for catching Cleo Laine's sortie into the Green Room. A mischievous and underrated songstress, Frishberg anticipated Ivana Trump and our very own young royals by a good 30 years. With John Dankworth's sprightly arrangements pared down for a quartet in these plush surroundings, Laine's multi-octave vocal style still dazzles. *Creole Love Call, I Thought About You* and a funky *St Louis Blues* are among the highlights of an absorbing programme. Cafe Royal, Regent St, London W1 (0171-437 9050), tonight, Tues 20 to 24, 9.15pm.

JAMES CARTER/TOMMY SMITH James Carter, saxophone wunderkind, arrives in London trailing the kind of critical praise previously lavished on another rising American star, Joshua Redman. An aggressive player who is not averse to piling up raw R & B licks, Carter goes all mellow and cuddly on his new jazz ballads collection *The Real Quietstorm*. Tommy Smith, Scotland's great tenor hope, has been out of the limelight since the short-lived glory days with Blue Note. He returns to Soho with an exceptional line-up including trumpeter Guy Barker and saxophonist Andy Panayi. *Carter: The Rhythmic*, Chapel Market, London N1 (0171-713 5352), Wed 21, Thur 22, 9pm. **Q** *Smith: Pizza Express*, Dean St, London W1 (0171-439 8722), Wed 21 to Sat 24, 9pm.



Sexism in action: Tricia Kelly and Rachel Power star in Lisa Evans's modern adaptation of Mrs Henry Wood's Victorian melodrama, *East Lynne* (see Theatre)

whoever throws the dice. The game also unleashes Robin Williams, sucked into the board 25 years earlier, and desperate to complete the game. The storyline could be strengthened, but the action is spectacular. Joe Johnston directs. Clapham (0171-988 3323); MGMS Baker Street (0171-935 5096), Fulham Road (0171-370 2636); Odeons: Kensington (01426 914666), Leicester Square (01426 915683), Marble Arch (01426 914501). Swiss Cottage (01426 914098); UCI Whitley (0171-792 3323).

ULYSSES' GAZE (PG) Theo Angelopoulos is a master of visual poetry, though the layers of allegory impede dramatic progress. Harvey Keitel seems more symbol than human being as an emigré filmmaker returning to his heritage to trace fragments of a film shot by pioneers of Balkan cinema in 1905. Angelopoulos attempts to honour cinema's centenary, the current Bosnian conflict, Greek myth, and his own concerns — a grand, impossible task. But just watch that sailing ship, pale blue from mast-head to prow, edging into the grey harbour: sheer magic. Lumière (0171-836 0640); *Renoir* (0171-837 8402); Ritzy (0171-737 2121).

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

RATTLE'S RAVEL Such is the huge "lead time" in the classical music business that Sir Simon Rattle, who announced his resignation from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra this month, actually remains at the helm for another two years. His CBSO concerts on Tuesday and Thursday this week see him in late-Romantic mood: Ravel's sensuous *Mother*



Frank Zappa's composition resurfaces at the Festival Hall

and bizarre mixture of orchestral rock and synthesised sounds. At the Festival Hall tomorrow it is recreated by Zappa's favourite collaborators, the Ensemble Modern, for one performance only. In the same programme is a performance of *Deserts* by an earlier pioneer, Edgard Varèse, who had a considerable influence on Zappa; this will be accompanied by a specially made video by the artist Bill Viola. A feast for ear and eye. Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-960 2424), tomorrow, 8pm. **Q**

David Sinclair

ERIC CLAPTON After last year's rather severe blues showcase, normal service is resumed for Eric Clapton's tenth consecutive Albert Hall residency. With no new album to promote, rock's most distinguished instrumentalist will doubtless present a broad cross-section of standards and favourites from a repertoire spanning more than three decades. His band will incorporate the drummer Steve Gadd along with stalwarts such as Andy Fairweather Low, guitar, Jerry Portnoy, harmonica, and Chris Stainton, keyboards, so the musicianship will naturally be of the highest order, if a little on the relaxed side for some tastes. Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW1 (0171-589 8212), Feb 18-20, 22-24, 26-28, Mar 1-3. **Q**

PULP Following their Christmas dates at Brixton, the Britpop darlings are back with a tour which marks their first incursion into the arena circuit. Led by the irrepressible Jarvis Cocker, their show is a bright, theatrical production, freighted with grand, anthemic pop songs such as *Common People*, that should prove ideally suited to the demands of the nation's more cavernous venues. The guest on all dates is the post-modernist pop maestro Edwyn Collins, whose band features former Sex Pistols Paul Cook on drums.

Brighton Centre (01273 202881), Feb 20; Cardiff International Arena (0122 224488); Feb 21; NEC, Birmingham (0121-780 4133); Feb 22; Manchester Arena (0161-834 4477); Feb 23; Royal Highland Centre, Inglisland, Edinburgh (0131-333 3036); Feb 25; Newcastle Arena (0191-401 8000), Feb 26; Huma-

beside Ice Arena, Hull (01482 215004), Feb 28; Sheffield Arena (0114-255 5656), Feb 29; Wembley Arena (0181-900 1234), Mar 1. **Q**

SHARK REVIVED Not many pieces of music are named after surfboards: Frank Zappa's *The Yellow Shark* is one of them. It was the rock pioneer's last significant composition: a clangorous, funny

goose ballet, and that impressionistic masterpiece *La Valse*, preceded by the Sibelius Violin Concerto played by the teenage sensation Sarah Chang.

Symphony Hall, Broad St, Birmingham (0121-212 3333), Tues 20, Thur 22, 7.30pm. **Q**

SEMELE "No oratorio, but a bawdy opera," as one contemporary put it, and quite right. Corelli's saucy libretto deals on the surface with a flirty royal mistress who gets ideas above her station, but Handel's music turns a cynical morality play into a compassionate study of human frailty. The lyrical coloratura Ruth Ann Swenson makes her debut in the lead; Philip Langridge is Jupiter, with Felicity Palmer as Juno. Sir Charles Mackerras conducts.

Royal Opera House, Bow St, London W1 (0171-734 5082), until March 8.

OPERA

Rodney Milnes

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE Hurry

— word of mouth after last week's triumphant first night will have started a run on the English National Opera box-office. This is

the moment of the year for the English National Opera. The cast will

incorporate the drummer Steve Gadd along with stalwarts such as Andy Fairweather Low, guitar, Jerry Portnoy, harmonica, and Chris Stainton, keyboards, so the musicianship will naturally be of the highest order, if a little on the relaxed side for some tastes.

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INSIDE STORY

'She drops his hand as if it were a dead rat'



The Clintons slogging along the campaign trail in New York in 1991

KATZ

REX

For Stanton read Clinton! The President celebrates at an inaugural ball having nearly been "toasted" by Gennifer Flowers. Bill and Hillary, here with their daughter Chelsea, presented a united front on television

Continued from page 1
Stanton loses and they can all go to Bermuda).

The narrator, whose fictional name is Henry Burton but whose real name is today sought by the cream of US journalism, also bakes Mrs Stanton. But, well, it is only once, and at a very low point in the campaign's fortunes.

The candidate's wife is the undisputed political leader of the novel's events. She is the heroine. It is she who listens to the narrator when he miserably recalls the "jubus", the artificial sweeteners without which nothing in his previous political job in Congress could get done. It is she whose skillful use of language diverts the press from their prey: with a well-chosen word or two she can scatter the gulls from the garbage barge of her husband's campaign.

Washingtonians still argue today about the extent to which Hillary Clinton rules the White House. In 1996 it is part of the President's burden to defend his wife against charges of financial deceit and political cover-up; the focus is on Mrs Clinton's role in the Whitewater affair. In 1992 all the defending was on the other side.

How, for example, was the Governor to counter the allegations of Gennifer Flowers? In *Primary Colors* Mrs Stanton hears the news of the scandalous tapes and says, unusually, "Henry, could you excuse us please?". She slaps her husband round the face to make him even more pink than usual and then has to decide what to do. The would-be First Couple choose to give a 20 minute state-of-the-marriage address, delivered on television to a massive national audience after the Superbowl. The price of failure: the whole Stanton campaign would be "toast".

Four years ago, if Mrs Clinton had not taken part in that most bizarre of broadcasts, there would almost certainly be no President Clinton

today. The book's account closely follows my memory of the event as it happened: at a difficult moment in the interview with some serious network scamps, she grasps his hand. In the book, she does the same, triumphantly admitting that "we did have some tough times in our marriage but we worked our way through it". When the studio lights go off, she drops his hand "as if it were a dead rat".

Anonymous' novel is more than a political roman à clef. Of course, the author denies, for the record, that any of *Primary Colors*' events happened at all. This author knows about close quarters about the way scamps consort with pols. Since that is much of what modern American democracy is about, the novel helps its readers to understand much about modern American democracy.

Early in 1992 the bigshot scamps and their bosses were reluctant to repeat the confessions of Gennifer Flowers that had appeared on cable television and in a supermarket tabloid. At one point readers of *The Times* in London would have known much more about her story than many Americans. But, as Anonymous cor-

rectly analyses, American reporters found ways to write about it — at one remove.

"The scamps weren't reporting the trash, but how we dealt with the trash," writes the narrator. "The story hadn't really broken yet ... and already it was one step removed: the press was reporting about how the candidate would deal with how the press would report about the story." And so it was. We were all in it one way or another, the much-distrusted national pencils, the much-stroked and cosseted local pencils, the television scamps and the British reporters whose allegations, dignified by distance, would occasionally feed back into the process from London.

Anonymous also describes well the mysteries of negative campaigning, of finding dirt on your opponent and being ready to use it. He calls it "oppo", "the primal impulse, the headquarters of all tactics and strategy: the oldest and most dishonourable exercise linked to the Will to Power".

While one part of Stanton's team is dealing with Barbecue Willie's daughter and the awkward personal result of his "defeat by the fundies on sex education" in Arkansas, another is preparing to smear his opponent over a dubious land deal, a Julu too far. This mere threat of oppo is enough.

Why do politicians put up with the pressures of office-seeking, the discomfort, the judges "the eternity of false smiles"? Some, says Anonymous, just want to win for the sake of winning "and they're willing to sell their souls, crawl through sewers, lie to the people, play to their worst fears". For others, certainly in his view for Bill Clinton, "it is the price you pay for it".

He loves his presidential primary candidates, all of them.

We may not know the author's real name until financial results of the copyright-holding company, Machiavellians Inc, have to be revealed to the tax authorities in 1997. Almost everyone in Washington who might have written it has been chased by other journalists in Washington who might have written it — and issued more or less comprehensive denials. My good friend and campaign watcher, Christopher Hitchens, has suggested his own list of suitably well-connected possibilities. He has also been seen signing copies in bookshops himself.

In response to promptings from my old haunts, I have even asked my secretive novelist wife, Sally Emerson, about her recent research trips to Washington. "Hmmm... that American novel you've been working on?" But she too denies authorship. Even the publisher, apparently, does not know where his latest best-seller has come from.

Like President Clinton, the author of *Primary Colors* is a fierce optimist about what politicians can achieve. Despite his disgust with the process — bad meals, bad trips, bad people, even the bad sex — he does not deride the urge for idealists to rise to the top in politics. He does not subscribe to determinist beliefs that politicians merely grab rewards of what would have happened even if they themselves had never existed. He loves the Clintons — and

he loves his presidential primary candidates, all of them.

Ruth Gledhill finds missionary zeal in Barbados

Singing for salvation



COOCOONED in the artificial and sensuous world of their hotels, visitors to Barbados are often unaware that it is an intensely religious society. It can take a visit to a local Caribbean church to discover the strange contradictions in a tiny island

which is partly reminiscent of middle-England 30 years ago, and partly akin to modern-day America.

Our taxi driver, Berkeley White, explained that the church into whose hands he was about to deliver us was one of the biggest on the island. Sure enough, when we arrived, the church was packed with nearly 1,800 people, the women in brightly coloured cottons, silks and sequins and the men, though fewer in number, also dressed in Sunday-best jacket and tie.

The Abundant Life Assembly church takes

its name from John 10:10: "I am come that you might have life and that more abundantly."

The members of one of the most impressive church pop bands I have ever seen ascended the stage to take their places followed by the large gospel choir.

The church is part of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies, the largest such grouping in the eastern Caribbean, founded in the 1940s by Canadian pentecostalists.

The religious equivalent of a warm-up man put us in the mood for the lively worship to come. "Good morning to all of you," he announced with an enormous grin. "Have you said good morning to the person next to you? Have you turned round and blessed them?" This made a change from the stilted exchanges of the peace. I was more used to, "We all blessed each other with hugs and kisses,

and clapped and danced through our first gospel hymn, *There is Power in the Blood*.

More songs followed, working the congregation to a pitch where some began murmuring strange things, "speaking in tongues" as it is known in charismatic congregations.

Then came an interjection which turned out to be the first of many in similar vein, but felt strange to me as someone used to an established church blessed with endowments where appeals for cash during worship are still, even today, fairly discreet. "When you invest money into mission, you know that it is something that is part of what God is doing," the worship leader said.

Later, we heard that the church gives 12,000 Barbados dollars each month to missionary work, equivalent to about £4,000. The pastor asked each one to pray for guidance on how much they should pledge, and promised he would not behave like a hire purchase company. "I will never send you a letter saying you are behind with your payments," he said. "It is between you and God."

Our preacher, the Rev Gerry Gallimore, took to the stage. Jamaican-born, he had travelled to Barbados from Singapore, where he heads the missionary organisation Youth for Christ. His sermon, which seemed to become louder as he progressed and his enthusiasm grew, was compelling.

As the phrase "rock bottom" achieved new meaning for me, I prayed finally for salvation. As if reading my mind, Mr Gallimore stared at me and said: "Salvation is free but it ain't cheap." I left, materially poorer, physically weaker, but feeling profoundly changed and richer.

The Abundant Life Assembly, Bank Hall, St Michael, Barbados (001 809 427 9166).



The scamps and pencils in 1992. Each now wonders whether another is Anonymous

Cover image of the Clintons in 1992 by KATZ

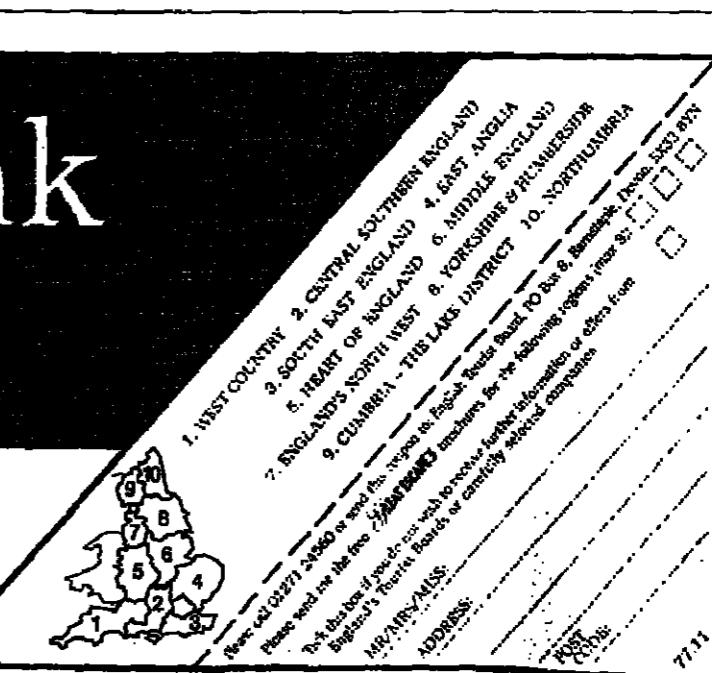
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1/11

GARDENING

GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q A tree surgeon says that red-orange fungus at the base of my 40-year-old Scots pine is *Fomes annosus*, which attacks the roots and that the tree should be felled. Is there any alternative, and is it safe to replant another large, containerised Scots pine? — Mrs V. Burnett, Burley, Hampshire.

A *Fomes annosus*, or *Heterobasidion annosum* as it is now known, is a common killer of Scots pines. It is not curable, nor is it easy to tell far the infection has spread underground, but with all such root rots the tree will eventually fall over. Better to have it felled, and have the stump ground out professionally and replaced with fresh soil before replanting. (This fungus can pass from root to root, or enter through stem damage above ground.) I would replace the pine with a deciduous tree. If you really want a Scots pine, plant a few little ones for a few pence each and see what happens, rather than spending large sums on containerised stock.

Q I wish to hide, quickly, a section of south-facing fence under a birch tree. To the left and right the fence is screened with laurel and escallonia. A rhododendron died here last winter, and later an escallonia. What should I plant? — Mrs Dransfield, Wimbledon, south London.

A Rhododendrons do not die easily. I suspect that in this position, with thirsty, shallow birch roots and laurel roots, and in the rain shadow of the fence, it began to die of drought in summer. The same with the escallonia. If

the area is dry and rooty, you may do better to plant old-fashioned, ironclad shrubs such as laurel, spotted laurel or the (slower) *Mahonia aquifolium*. Or you might train the large-leaved, yellow variegated ivy *Hedera colchica* 'Sulphur Heart' up the fence, with clumps of evergreen *Iris foetidissima* at its foot.

Q I have a bank of wild cyclamen and they are moving downhill. Can I replant the corms back at the top of the slope and, if so when? The corms vary from 2in-3in across to small seedlings. — H.C. Maude, Canterbury, Kent.

A These hardy cyclamen readily seed and naturally migrate downwards. They are suited to poor soil or thin grass under the shade of trees. The smaller corms move best when, say, half an inch across, but larger ones can be moved, too, taking care to minimise root disturbance. In ideal conditions, cyclamen can grow several times larger than your largest corm, so at 2in-3in it is not too late to move them. Do this in late summer as the leaves begin to grow, retaining a plug of soil and enough root for them to anchor until established. Also, collect seedheads (easy to spot on those corkscrew stems) and scatter seed at the top of the slope.

• Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9DX. We regret that for personal answers to be given and to deal with every request, Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

Whiten the dark with carpets of snowdrops

Stephen Anderton tells how to tune in to the welcoming heralds of a new spring

A lthough I have never found the precise source of the quotation, a friend always used to quote Vita Sackville-West as saying: "You can never have too much white in a garden." This is probably true. In summer, any colour scheme can be enlivened with white *ad infinitum*, making the effect paler and paler, though not necessarily any less striking. In winter, when there are almost no hot colours about, white acquires a different importance. It somehow seems more at home, more significant and proper.

Snowdrops are the great winter whiteners and it would be hard to plant too many of them, though the everywhere-all-costs, wall-to-wall planting of anything is dreary. They lighten darkness so well. Any ground under trees or shrubs, hidden in summer perhaps, may be carpeted with snowdrops when the leaves are off the trees. They will not do so well in rooty, dry shade, but in a fertile soil with adequate moisture, they multiply effortlessly from year to year: pale heads "heavy as metal", as Ted Hughes describes them.

Plant them in sheets, dense in some parts and thinner in others. The common *Galanthis nivalis* will seed itself and spread naturally, and build up into vigorous clumps, even when planted in grass. A new carpet planted on bare centres soon thickens into a seemingly continuous cover — especially with occasional disturbance from gardeners or moles.

Some of the other named varieties of snowdrop, available from specialist suppliers, are far less vigorous and better suited to use in borders. When planting for a natural effect, vary the distances between plants, putting some areas in at 2in to 3in centres, and others more widely. There should also be variation in the size of clumps, from single bulbs to twos and threes and even a dozen.

The best time to divide and replant

GARDENS TO VISIT

THE following gardens open for snowdrop time (check for flowering by telephone):
C Anglesey Abbey, Lode, Cambridgeshire (01223 812100): Sat-Sun until Feb 25, 11am-4pm. £3.20, children half price.
C Belsay Hall, Northumberland (01661 881636): daily, 10am-4pm. £2.60, children half price.
C Fountains Abbey, Ripon, North Yorks (01765 608889): daily until the end of Mar, 10am-5pm. £4, children half price.
C Hodsock Priory, Blyth, near Worksop, Nottinghamshire (01909 591204): open weekdays noon-4pm, weekends 10am-4pm, until Mar 10. £2, children free.
C Ickworth Park, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk (01284 735270): daily, 10am-7pm. £2 per car.
C Kingston Lacy, Wimborne Minster, Dorset (01202 883402): daily until Feb 18, 11am-4pm. £1, under-16s free.
C Painswick Rococo Garden, Painswick, Gloucestershire (01452 813204): Wed-Sun, 11am-5pm. £2.75, children £1.50.

The common snowdrop, *Galanthus nivalis*, will spread naturally in clumps, even when planted in grass

spring-flowering *C. coum*, or its white variant, *album*.

In recent years, more and more gardens with spectacular displays of snowdrops have been making special openings at this time of year. At Painswick Rococo Garden, Gloucestershire, the plants are thought to have been widely planted since at least 1795, and it was for James Atkyns, head gardener there in the 1860s, that the robust form 'Atkynsii' was named. At Belsay Castle, Northumberland, Lady Anne Ettrick is said to have planted snowdrops as early as the 1720s.

Guessing the exact timing of a snowdrop display is never easy. It varies from north to south and

according to aspect. A fortnight before the common snowdrops comes *Galanthus elwesii*, with broad, attractively grey leaves. The earliest snowdrops arrive before Christmas. *G. reginae-olgae* appears (without its leaves), in September, and *G. cordiger* shortly after.

The best snowdrops I have seen so far this year were in watercolour paintings by Jenny Jowett at the Royal Horticultural Society's January show in London. Each painting, mostly of named varieties, included cut-away close-ups of the subtle differences in their markings. They

were selling fast, and clearly recognised as the best way to appreciate these polite distinctions.

● Divide and replant clumps of aconites and snowdrops while still in full leaf, and even flower.

● Protect early blossom on wall fruit trees against frost with polythene, netting, or paper.

● Cut back to two to three buds the long wands of growth on wisteria.

● Sow, over heat, bedding plants requiring an early start, such as begonia, lobelia and antirrhinum.

● Remove old, dead leaves of *Helleborus orientalis* before flowering starts.

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BOOKS

Critical to be kind

A reviewer's integrity is under constant conflicting pressures

I have been reviewing books for six years, but of the 58 reviews I have written, 30 have been in the past 18 months. Of those 58 books, I would classify nine as absolute horrors, 17 as various shades of indifferent, and 32 as ranging from good to exceptional. This does not mean a great deal. It is merely a reflection of my taste, my opinions and my preference to err on the side of generosity.

Should you judge all books using the same criteria? There is no point reviewing a blockbuster as you might review a serious novel or biography or social history. For example, I did not approach Anthony Storr's *Music and The Mind* as I approached Penny Vincenzi's novel *Another Woman*.

Storr's book is an erudite study of a complex subject: Vincenzi's is blockbuster romantic fiction. I did not give Storr's book a glowing review because he is a better writer than Vincenzi and I did not give Vincenzi's book a poor review because it was not as good as Storr's. I gave it a poor review because even within its own terms I thought it disappointing.

Having said that, there are questions that pertain to every book. Does the author have anything to say? Is this book entertaining, original or instructive? If not, why not?

If a book has nothing to say that has not been said before, or, worse still, has nothing to say at all, it should never have been published. In these instances, it is your duty as a reviewer to speed it to the nearest recycling plant so that it can find new life as cereal packaging.

However, it is also your duty to seek out redeeming features. It is easier to isolate weaknesses than strengths, to resort to sarcasm than strive towards generosity, but it is wrong. Kindness may not be glamorous but it rarely hurts.

When is kindness dishonest? Four weeks ago I tore apart a novel by Elizabeth Pewsey on these pages because I thought it not only boring and unoriginal but snobbish. This was unfortunate for the author: all



MARY LOUDON

reviewers have their *bêtes noires* and snobbery is mine. Originally I was going to be marginally kinder but I disliked it so much that I decided to reflect on it a little. Imagining how much pain the review may have caused the author worried me. It is never fun demolishing a piece of work in which someone else has invested a tremendous amount. As a writer myself, I know only too well how much time, energy, love and hope are poured into a book and how terrible a bad review can make you feel.

Nevertheless, if you are not prepared to write a bad review, when something really marvelous falls into your lap, the validity of your praise is diminished. Compromise only compromises you. Of course, there is no guarantee that someone whose book you have criticised will not do the same to you.

Yet my second book was given a lovely review by a writer whose own work I had attacked in print six months earlier, proving that in some admirable cases integrity can override a desire for revenge.

I have not been quite so generous. A few months ago I was sent for review a book by someone who hated my last one, so I sent it back.

Perhaps I should have reviewed it, but I was concerned that my hostility, however unforgiving, was likely to cloud my judgment. I had no desire to rubbish the book, but I felt that it would get a fairer reading elsewhere.

In the end, though, there is no way of knowing how effective reviews are. Kate Atkinson won the Whitbread prize after many excellent reviews. The consistent praise heaped upon the interviewer Tony Parker has not yet turned him into a household name. Vincenzi sells more books than many writers. And Chang-rae Lee, whose novel *Native Speaker* I reviewed for this paper and chose, along with Atkinson's, as one of the two most outstanding books I had reviewed in 1995, remains almost unheard of.

Outlaw hero or bank-robbing thug, there is less to a famous desperado than this thick novel, says Erica Wagner

BIG-TIME crime ain't what it used to be. Back in the Depression, when Quentin Tarantino's mother was barely a gleam in her mother's eye, crooks knew how to do things right. They respected their elders; they loved their wives; they avoided using their tommy-guns if at all possible and when things did not go quite the way they planned, did they swear? No, sir. They said "applesauce".

Charles Arthur "Pretty Boy" Floyd was one such criminal, an Oklahoma bank robber who featured on J. Edgar Hoover's "Ten Most Wanted" list. He terrorised and fascinated the Western states until his death, at the hands of Hoover's G-men, in 1934.

Like John Dillinger and Bonnie and Clyde, he entered American legend, this novel, an expansion of a screenplay written by the authors for Warner Brothers in 1993, tells his story.

But despite the book's size and heft, there is not much of a story to tell. Floyd, handsome and charming as his moniker suggests, falls into a life of crime because he is bored and a little greedy, and finds that once he has started, it is hard to stop. Despite

■ PRETTY BOY FLOYD
By Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana
Orion, £16.99

his affection for his young wife Ruby and their son Dempsey, he takes up with various women of dubious morals, including the splendidly named Whizbang Red — the very image of the Whore with a Heart of Gold.

As such, she cannot help being a

cliché — a far worse evil than prostitution as far as novels are concerned — and sadly she is only one of many. This is disappointing, because McMurtry, writing alone, has otherwise proved himself adept at avoiding such bunkum, despite dealing with such easily hackneyed subjects as cowboys and Indians. But Floyd's cowboy accomplice, George Birdwell, seems straight out of a

paddington western: So Floyd robs some banks; he runs out of money; he robs again. He goes back to Ruby; he takes up with Whizbang or Beulah; and so on and so forth to the inevitable bullet-riddled end.

The book's ramblings are not displeasing: it is perfectly enjoyable and I cried at the end. But I would have wished, too, for a greater structure to have been imposed on Floyd's aimless life. The authors tell us, in their "collaborators' note", that for each day's work "L.M." provided a sketchy five pages, which "D.O." padded out into ten. You cannot help but imagine the streamlined novel we might have had without that quotidian expansion.

Pretty Boy runs to fat

Too white a shade of pale

Walter Ellis on a bizarre true story of black race prejudice

MARSHA HUNT is best re-

membered in Britain for her singing career in the 1960s and 1970s and for the fact that Mick Jagger is the father of her daughter, Karis. Later, she became an accomplished actress and, more recently, a novelist. It was in the spring of 1991 that she discovered, via a telephone call from an American cousin, that her grandmother, Ernestine, whom she had long assumed to be dead,

of Ernestine's rediscovery is not so much the fact that a young woman, with so much to give, was condemned to life imprisonment without cause, but that throughout her long life it has been her pale skin that has most entrapped her. Her own mother had been half German-Jewish, and this meant that neither whites nor blacks fully accepted her as one of their own. Ernestine, with her blonde hair and blue eyes, obviously attracted Blair and had borne him three sons by the time she was 21. Soon after, though, she was committed and the Reverend settled down with a darker second wife.

Hunt repeats over and over her opinion that since slavery, negro class culture has always been defined by skin colour and hair: the lighter the skin and the straighter the hair, the better. "If you're light, you're right; if you're brown, you'll get around; but if you're black, step back" went the rhyme. Ernestine's tragedy was that she had apparently gone a step too far and was no longer recognised as black.

Hunt has since rescued her and found a home for her close relatives in Boston. But she cannot unmake the past. "What makes people avoid death after they cease to be interested in life?" she asks. She does not come up with the answer.

Hunt: shocking account

was in fact living in a home in Memphis, Tennessee.

Ernestine, now aged 98, had been diagnosed as "mentally unstable" in 1925 and confined for more than half a century in the Western State Hospital, Tennessee. Her husband, Blair, was a headmaster, a minister of religion and a pillar of his local community. But for all that she was young and pretty, a college graduate and the mother of his three sons, she appears to have been dumped without ceremony.

What shocks in this account

■ REPOSSESSING ERNESTINE
By Marsha Hunt
HarperCollins, £15.99



Yves Montand delivers the Gallic shrug so vital to the game of *pétanque* — from *The Taste of Provence* by Martine Bouchet and Prosper Assouline (Editions Assouline, £35)

Tease before bedtime

■ DANCE WITH ME
By Louise Doughty
Touchstone, £9.99

BET AND Iris live parallel lives and, it becomes gradually and shudderingly apparent, inhabit parallel universes as well. In this tricksy, odd and very funny novel, it is hard to tell what is real and what is virtual reality but it does not matter much. Delivering up solid facts is not Louise Doughty's style: she is a player of slippery, literary games and a superb tease.

Bet inherits a house and a fortune from a recent lover, Peter, killed in a car crash. Sharp, knowing and sassy, she soon realises that there is something murky about the arrangement and does some sleuthing into Peter's affairs, in both senses of the word.

Meanwhile, Iris, one of the many women whom Peter has chewed up and spat out, sits moodily at her computer in a terrifyingly decrepit office block, trying to come to terms with loneliness, a broken heart and shadowy figures slithering along the corridors.

Both women have a lot to say about sex and the single girl. Bet is insouciantly promiscuous — a strewd anti-romantic who regards men as some amusing form of lowlife. When one of her lovers indicates that he feels nothing for her, she reports crisply "this is something of a blow to my ego because I find it utterly unreasonable that any man should not fall hysterically in love with me. However, if he was hysterically in love with me, I would be completely horrified because he is shorter than me and not a very nice person." Yet in spite of her ironic detachment, she believes that "you must never forget for one minute how many reasons there are for a man — any man — to hate you".

It is as self-aware as Bet, "in complete control of her delusions", but not nearly so up on sexual etiquette. She is bewildered when men behave badly. "They ask you to have sex with them but they don't want to. Or they want to but they want you not to want to."

The fates of these two entwined and twist eerily together. Surroundings become increasingly scary: ghosts are seen, or imagined; people are raised from the dead. Sometimes, the gruesome pranks that Doughty delights in seem a bit too heady but her observations on women's lives are breathtakingly original.

GILL HORNBY

PENNY PERRICK

Looking for Ms Write

CAROLINE UPCHER has worked in the film industry, spent 20 years in publishing and once achieved an oblique celebrity as the ghost writer of Naomi Campbell's *Swan*. *Falling for Mr Wrong* is her first novel under her own name and, for subject matter, she has stuck close to home.

She stuck close to home.

Polly struggles to get her

own agency off the ground

and begins the search for Mr

Right, all within the small

triangle of Notting Hill, Soho

and South Kensington. But

once she has sold the screen

rights of a client's novel to her

former husband, everyone de-

camps to the South of France

for the shoot. The film — *Mr*

Wrong — concerns a playboy

— cum — serial killer; its star is one

Hector O'Neill, a delicious

hunk with a dirt-poor Irish

background. And the script

is as complete as her delusions

, but not nearly so up

on sexual etiquette. She is

bewildered when men behave

badly. "They ask you to have

sex with them but they don't

want to. Or they want to but

they want you not to want to."

As one might expect, this

story comes professionally

packaged. What is disappoin-

ting is the banality of its

ideas and, by the end, the

deadliness of its setting.

Polly's affair with Hector

on the Côte d'Azur may be

average fantasy stuff of ser-

vants, swimming-pools and

steamy sex but, hell, at least it

is escapism. And after two

thirds of a novel set in the

lower divisions of literary

London, we are gasping for it.

GILL HORNBY

PENNY PERRICK

Dream machine

MR SINGH is a bad-tempered Nairobi garage owner, who longs to build his own Rolls-Royce. He is plagued by Kamau, an accident-prone country lad who longs to work for Mr Singh and who points out with beautiful, infuriating logic that a car not made by the "Rolls-Royce maker" cannot be a Rolls-Royce. Their adventures are told by Sylvia Sherry in *Elephants Have Right of Way* (Jonathan Cape, £19.99), with superb illustrations by Quentin Blake.

On a hilarious journey into the bush for some mythical spare parts, both Mr Singh and Kamau unexpectedly realise their dreams. Sherry has captured the magic of a well-knit story, rhythmical and agreeably repetitive, yet challenging the mind and vocabulary of the more confident reader, aged nine or over.

Charlotte Voake's *Mr Davies and the Baby* (Walker, £8.99) also has a fresh feel. Mr Davies is the kind of horrid little dog that frightens your baby out of its wits by yapping furiously from behind a garden gate. He slips out, chases barks and terrifies ducks. But Voake's attractive drawings and calligraphic text turn Mr Davies

into a hero and would persuade the crossest mump to feel sympathy for him. For reading to under fives.

My six-year-old complains that I read him too many miserable books about death, so here are some happy picture books for under sevens.

Jill Rattray's *The King Who Lost His Crown* (Magi, £7.99) and Margaret Greaves' *Tattercoats* (Frances Lincoln, £4.99) are both cheerfully illustrated fairy-tales unscarred by the self-conscious political correctness that some authors mistake for wit.

Ivan Bates has created strong, page-filling illustrations for Sam McBrane's *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs* (Walker, £8.99), in which a family of mice learn that home is the safest place, and it is a delight to encounter little Ellen and her emotional toy penguin in Clara Vulliamy's *Ellen and Penguin and the New Baby* (Walker, £8.99). With a new baby in the house, Ellen's penguin cannot sleep at night, "so Ellen had to bring him downstairs and walk round and round with him, patting his back". Familiar?

SARAH JOHNSON

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BOOKS

Torched by the fires of the rising sun

The rape of Nanking by the Japanese in 1937 is the background for a dense and absorbing novel, Frances Donnelly says



Anne Tyler: delicately humorous and forgiving

■ THE LADDER OF YEARS

By Anne Tyler
Vintage, £5.99
DELIA GRINSTEAD, doctor's wife and mother of three, has dwelt all her life in the same rambling house in Baltimore. An unassuming friendly person, she is taken for granted by her uncommunicative husband and increasingly remote adolescent children. She has nursed her father through his terminal illness six months earlier, and is grieving still, though not even her two sisters seem to realise how much.

Delia feels herself growing "wavery around the edges", and escapes into romantic novels in which raven-haired heroines are rescued from lives of drudgery by aristocrats with flashing

eyes. But then on the family's annual vacation to the ocean she abandons her relatives and, wearing only her swimsuit, just keeps walking. Anne Tyler's thirteenth novel traces the consequences of her veritigious act.

As always Tyler's sympathetically observed characters are ordinary people who struggle with the wounds of everyday insensitivity, parents watching their children grow up and away, and underpinning all the fearful prospect of old age. At the heart of *The Ladder of Years* stands the Senior City apartment block, each floor representing another step in inevitable decline. It could be depressing, but Tyler's touch, so delicately humorous and forgiving, makes this a deeply enjoyable book.

■ A MAP OF THE WORLD

By Jane Hamilton
Black Swan, £6.99
ALICE and Howard Goodwin are seen as unconventional outsiders in the small Midwestern town of Prairie Centre. They've learned to live with this vague but ever-present feeling of hostility, until a fearful accident on their farm precipitates an all-out witch-hunt. This gripping novel is a portrait of a marriage, and of a friendship between two women which is put to the severest imaginable test. It is about grief and guilt and loss, and it moves with all the inevitability of a Greek tragedy to a cathartic ending.

■ FIVE MINUTES IN HEAVEN

By Lisa Alther
Penguin, £6.99
FIVE minutes in heaven is the kissing game Jude played passing from childhood to adolescence in America's sleepy South, and it seems that all Jude's loves last five minutes before dying. First her mother, then her special friends Molly and Sandy, one in a teenage car crash; the other beaten to death in 1960s New York. Finally she falls in love with intoxicating, destructive Anna, only to watch her waste away, before realising that her own life must go on. A striking picture of the evolution of a personality.

■ WHOM GODS DESTROY

By Ruth Padel
Princeton, £9.95
EDWARD MUNCH'S *The Scream*, which appears on the cover of Padel's book, reflects the pervasive ideas and influence of Greek perceptions of madness in modern European art and literature. Padel traces the evolution of the wandering and isolated figure, juxtaposed with a dark landscape, as an image of 20th-century madness which would have been familiar to the Greeks. Through a vast gallery of characters, from Icarus and Lear to Malvolio and Kurtz, Padel reveals the derivation of our perceptions of

THIS is a dark, dense, complicated account of the rise of Japan's military state until its eclipse at the end of the Second World War. This extraordinary novel's centerpiece is the rape of Nanking in 1937, where, having declared war against China, Japan inflicted six weeks of horrendous retribution on Chiang Kai-shek's new Chinese capital.

This gruesome episode is witnessed through the eyes of a group of foreigners trapped in the city, among them the Russian emigre Nadya, Tilik Dayal, an Indian Nationalist, Kenjiro, a liberal Japanese diplomat, and a British journalist called Don Addison.

This might not seem a story likely to engage the heart or prompt a speedy turning of pages. But what makes this book so completely absorbing is Metra Chand's own scrupulous and unfliching analysis of the Japanese character. She has lived in Japan since 1962, and her book is a meditation on what it was to be Japanese in the first half of the century. Obedience was given unquestioningly to the emperor and the goal was the domination first of

■ A CHOICE OF EVILS

By Meira Chand
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.99

southeast Asia, then the world. The diplomat, Kenjiro, appealed at the application of these ideals in Nanking, tries to explain the Japanese character to the English journalist. "We are not a vicious people... discipline, gentleness and harmony, these are our strengths. But our people are submissive, used to obey-

ing authority without question. Actions are judged according to their conformity to a set norm." At the other end of the Japanese chain of command but equally uneasy, Akira, a farmer turned soldier, finally deserts, unable to justify what he is doing. Even so, he knows he can never return home as his lack of obedience will have brought disgrace on his family.

If there is one thing each character learns, it is that no matter how vast

the scale of human suffering, each death is important. The Movietone news cameraman, Mariani, rebukes the English journalist for wasting film on an anonymous corpse in the river. They either have to be burnt black like chickens or dead in enormous quantities to qualify for his camera. Then Mariani himself is machine-gunned and dying. "This happened to me because I took no notice of death," he says. "The corpse I told you to ignore, he is important. He is like me, a small man with life and feelings."

Not an easy read, this is nevertheless a marvellously researched and impressively well-written novel.

With all passion misspent

■ MING'S KINGDOM

By Nigel Williamson
Hutchinson, £14.99

"OH HAPPINESS, enjoy'd but of few! And if poss'd, as soon decay'd and done! As is the morning's silver melted dew/Against the golden splendour of the sun."

The author of this novel is an actor of prodigious thespian talents, while the hero of his narrative is similarly gifted and decorated with more of the obvious rewards than Shakespeare of similar age, and anyway prefers the poetry of Larkin, the life of New York or Paris. Thespians are selective readers, which is one of the things which make the hero emerge as a bit of a git.

The plot concerns an imperfect love affair which was perceived as perfect. The actor, Rick, falls in lust with Adrienne, who has a bottom which looks as if it were carved out of marble, achieved, possibly, by the perfect alibi of working out five times a week. Sunday included. The sex is initially tremendous, on account of the single fact that she is so good at stretching her legs "till ten to two", although conversation is not brilliant, even when she gets cramp. Hoping that marriage will preserve and encourage this already warming and fluctuating passion, wonderful Big Boy (her description) insists on a marriage which sulky Miss Muscle keeps secret and, by now, does not want anyway.

Bozo Rick forgets anything he ever knew about there being a tide in the affairs of men, while infantile Adrienne cannot stand conflict and turns instead to manipulation and Momma, who is the misdirected devil of the story. Rick is not a man who loves too much, merely one who loves without judgment. A blind fool — the everyman who thinks his prick has the perception and vision of a perspicere.

And there lies the pity of it; the man of talent and experience proving as gullible as any other; the last to know the truth which even his best friend will tell him. There is an awful suspense in watching this self-absorbed creature being taken over, wading his bride with expensive private pleasures, only to find her dreadful entourage included at every turn, none of them unstoned.

Rick ought to have known that, for anyone but a luvvie, a woman with no other term of endearment than "sweetie" should have been his signal to run like hell. He does not we watch, wanting to shake him, carried through to the final curtain by gaudy fascination and a lot of anecdotal padding of a highly entertaining kind. The playwright, in this case, is better than the players.

Apart from her job, she is probably unique in crime fiction in living in Trenton, New Jersey, a city of spectacular nothingness. Her mother's

nature of perception, the imagination and narration.

Rupert Thomson handles it with a literary intelligence which met almost every requirement I felt I could possibly have of a novel. An illusion no doubt, but one which afforded two apparently contradictory pleasures: the reader could believe blindly in the writer's acrobatic fabulations and at the same time admire

■ THE INSULT

By Rupert Thomson
Bloomsbury, £10.99

the visible traps and wires by means of which they were simulated.

Michael is convinced that a small metal plate which has been inserted into his brain is allowing Dr Visser, his consultant at the eye hospital, to control him. The twist to

Michael's condition is that he can only see — or is only able to believe that he can see — at night. His affair with Nina, a stripper whom he meets in a bar, is conducted by night. He switches the lights off. He was dark in the bedroom. I watched her lift her blouse over her head.

Back out on the street in the morning, he is blind again.

"Outside it was almost light. The air was so cold, I could feel the shape of my lungs when I breathed in."

Nina disappears and as her lover is the last person to see her alive, Michael is both desperate to find her and a suspect in the eyes of the police. For a blind man, clues have to be verbal. An elderly female relative, whose narrative takes up most of the second half of the book, tells him the story of Nina's birth and reveals the identity of her abductor.

Whether clues of language are any more reliable than visual cues gives pause for thought in this stunningly clever thriller, through which runs a disturbing note of anguish humour that both belies and enhances the rare seriousness of the novel.

Feisty, fruity and dead funny

■ TWO FOR THE DOUGH

By Janet Evanovich
Hamish Hamilton, £12.50

overriding preoccupation is finding Stephanie a husband, for which purpose a stream of unmilitated jerks, nerds and losers are invited to the perpetually ripe family table.

Stephanie, by contrast, has a reluctant lifetime passion, occasionally acted out for local copper Joe Morelli ever since he did something nice to her behind his father's garage, when she was six and he eight.

She also has a grandmother who spends her time viewing dead bodies in funeral parlours to compare the artistic quality of their respective embalming techniques.

In *Two for the Dough*, Evanovich's second Plum novel, the quarry is a recently discharged soldier charged with shooting his former best friend. The search becomes embroiled with the disappearance of 24 cheap, empty coffins from Granny's favourite undertakers; fingers and other anatomical parts are snatched

from recently deceased bodies and start turning up in unusual places.

Stephanie Plum is a joy: self-deprecating, wise-cracking, overweight, raunchy, accident-prone and ill-suited to her job or to anything else she might do in Trenton, New Jersey. She perseveres with the help of a lot of Woody Allenish one-liners and some ambivalent thoughts about the macho and sexist Morelli. Plum does not take herself or her predicaments too seriously, which, after the often



Evanovich: delightful self-important and issues-obessed novels featuring some of America's other female fics, a great relief.

MARCEL BERLINS

Run for your life, little boy

■ NATHAN'S RUN

By John Gilstrap
Little, Brown, £12.99

radio talk hostess who calls herself "the Bitch". Like a good child of the media age, Nathan feels obliged to join in the live phone-in about himself. On air he claims that everything he has done has been in self-defense because of a plot to kill him.

The only flaw in the plot is that it takes the police so long to discover the motive. Meanwhile, as well as the posse of gun-toting deputies eager to nail this underage cop-killer, a sadistic Mafia hit man has Nathan's name on a contract. With his life in jeopardy and his credibility being judged by a nationwide radio audience, Nathan's calls to the Bitch provide him with his only public platform but also risk giving away his whereabouts.

Gilstrap massages the tension masterfully, slipping easily inside the mind of a 12-year-old, poised on that delicate, difficult threshold between childhood and adolescence. Nathan is almost excited by finding a bra in a drawer while rummaging in one of his hideaways but is still annoyed to find no toys in the house. His best moment is when the one friend he meets on the run gives him a plastic X-men figure as a good-luck charm.

Much of the violence is specifically American, in particular the electrifying climax,

but the scenario could easily be transferred to a British context, while the problems of shifting the assumption of blame are universal. The only thing wrong with *Nathan's Run* is that you will find yourself racing through it.

PETER MILLAR

Rushdie wins at last

SALMAN RUSHDIE beat a shortlist which also included Martin Amis, Pat Barker, Louis de Bernières and Minette Walters last week to become Author of the Year in the annual British Book Awards organised by Publishing News.

At the book trade's "Oscar" night, *Delta Smith's Winter Collection* was named Book of the Year.

Other awards included:

Publisher: Transworld Marketing Campaign: The Penguin 60s Children's Book: *The Hutchinson Treasury of Children's Literature* (edited by Alison Sage) Illustrated Book: *The River Café Cookbook*

When is a shop not a shop?



Always on Page 2
and in Weekend Money

RECORDINGS

NEW ON CD: Lou Reed returns to New York; Brazil's favourite son; Obrecht's mesmerising Mass; Sawallisch goes wild

POP SINGLE

David Sinclair

GABRIELLE**Give Me a Little More Time**

Go Beat 850 46***

LITTLE has been heard musically of south-London soul-singer Gabrielle since she won the Best Newcomer award at the Brits in 1994. *Give Me a Little More Time* will change all that. Written by Gabrielle and her producers, the Boilerhouse Boys, it is a wonderful song steeped in the best traditions of the Motown and Stax sound.

Underpinned by a gently loping beat and a big, brassy horn riff, Gabrielle's performance perfectly captures the



Gabrielle: Stax tradition

competing emotions of yearning and uncertainty as she stands on the brink of a new relationship. "You tried your best to convince me that you understand/And if I ever need someone to hold on to, you wanted to be the man," she sings, and there is no denying she is tempted by the offer. But still she pleads for a little more time to make up her mind.

The old-fashioned production might have sounded contrived were it not for the strength of the tune and the tremendous conviction of Gabrielle's delivery. In fact, if it were not a brand new song, one would be tempted to say that they simply do not make them like this any more.

POP ALBUM

David Sinclair

LOU REED**Set the Twilight Reeling**

Warner Bros 9362-46159**

RETURNING to active duty as if the ill-fated Velvet Underground reunion of 1993 had never happened, Lou Reed picks up the thread of his solo career without missing a beat on *Set the Twilight Reeling*.

Thankfully, he has pulled himself out of the morass of depression and despair which fuelled his last album, *Magic and Loss*. Instead, several

songs revisit the scene of his greatest triumph, the *New York* album of 1989, although the scathing world-weary tone of that classic is replaced here by a mood that is generally lighter and more upbeat.

"I'm a New York City man, blink your eyes and I'll be gone," he warns mischievously on *NYC Man*, using his deadpan drawl to sketch only the faintest outline of the tune, while delegating the detailed work to an untypically elaborate arrangement for horn section.

Reed, who will be 54 next month, still has a formidable stock of one-liners — "Nothing lasts forever, not even five minutes," he notes dryly on *Finish Line* — but his greatest strength remains his uncanny ability to conjure a song from the simplest of building blocks. In *Hookey*, he paints a rooftop picture of the city — "Looking at the chemical sky/All purple, blue and oranges, some pigeons flying by" — over a childishly simple, chugging riff that allows him a free rein to indulge his poetic ear for words.

The skin-and-bones production of numbers ranging from the jokey rocker *Egg Cream* to the earnest pseudo-soul of *Hang On to Your Emotions* further disguises the craft that goes into Reed's work, and even the more ambitious, sub-Hendrix pyrotechnics of *Rip Tide* tend to sound as if they have been rather casually knocked out.

He will need to make a more conspicuous effort if he is ever to produce another record as outstanding as *New York*, but this is fine for now.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

ANTONIO CARLOS JOBIN**The Man From Ipanema**

Verve 525 880 (3 CDs) 46***

THE easiest way to honour Antonio Carlos Jobim would have been to throw together a selection of his greatest hits. All the obvious titles — *Desafinado*, *Aqua de Beber* and *Wave* — find their way onto this memorial to the composer who died unexpectedly just over a year ago.

But just as Jobim created his own soundscape, straddling pop and jazz (and, in miniatures such as *Modinha* and *Soneto da Separacão*, the light classics), this anthology also demonstrates how his compositions lent themselves to radically different settings.

So it is that on the third disc — subtitled *Side by Side* — we hear three versions of *Desafinado* back to back — the string-laden, easy-listen-

NEW ON VIDEO: Boorman lost in the jungle; digital stew from the delicatessen; Steve Martin battles fate

On the run: John Boorman's jungle adventure *Beyond Rangoon*, starring Patricia Arquette, is set against the background of the pro-democracy struggle in Burma**■ BEYOND RANGOON**

Columbia TriStar, 12, 1995

JOHN BOORMAN likes pitting outsiders against raw nature, but Patricia Arquette's trek through the Burmese jungle brings no special magic or touch of myth. She is cut of her depth as an American tourist stirred by the pro-democracy movement who flees from the military with a dissident professor. The heat of the chase, by raft and by truck, generates some excitement, but you expect more from Boorman. Available to rent.

■ THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN

Rank Collection, U, 1995

SO WHO is the Nazi agent lurking on Leslie Banks's Scottish estate? Unlike to be the Cockney evacuee played by 16-year-old George Cole,

budget and an indigestible fantasy crammed with digital effects. If you hack a path through the trickery, you may find a plot: it hinges on the attempt by Ron Perlman's circus strongman to rescue a child kidnapped for the pleasure of an evil genius who lives on an oil rig. But the story never stirs emotions or drives the film forward; you must sink or swim in the bizarre images, set in a landscape that resembles Dickens, Jules Verne and David Lynch. Available to rent.

■ COTTAGE TO LET

Rank Collection, U, 1995

SO WHO is the Nazi agent lurking on Leslie Banks's Scottish estate? Unlike to be the Cockney evacuee played by 16-year-old George Cole,

but what about Alastair Sim's eccentric snooper, the cook, the butler, or even John Mills's RAF chaplain, who parachuted into the loch? Anthony Asquith's version of a 1940 stage success follows the Hitchcock formula but adds a ragged, zany charm all of its own.

■ DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE

Buena Vista, 15, 1995

JOHN MILLS found his first major film role as the sailor lad born out of wedlock because his parents came from different classes. But breeding will out, especially when you are fighting the Hun in the First World War. Dated but stirring stuff, based on C. S. Forester's novel *Brown on Resolution*; the studio discounted the title because it sounded too much like a textbook. Location work

is stronger appeal as a Harlequin shopkeeper who becomes Willis's sidekick, though their bantering scenes belong in a different film. Plenty of action but no dramatic focus. Available to rent.

■ FOREVER ENGLAND

Rank Collection, PG, 1995

BEST DETECTIVE Bruce Willis has another bad day. First the Bonfire Teller department store blows up. Then the battle rages all round New York, from Harlem to Wall Street, in tunnels, banks, subways and primary schools. The man responsible is Jeremy Irons, giving a pantomime performance as a terrorist

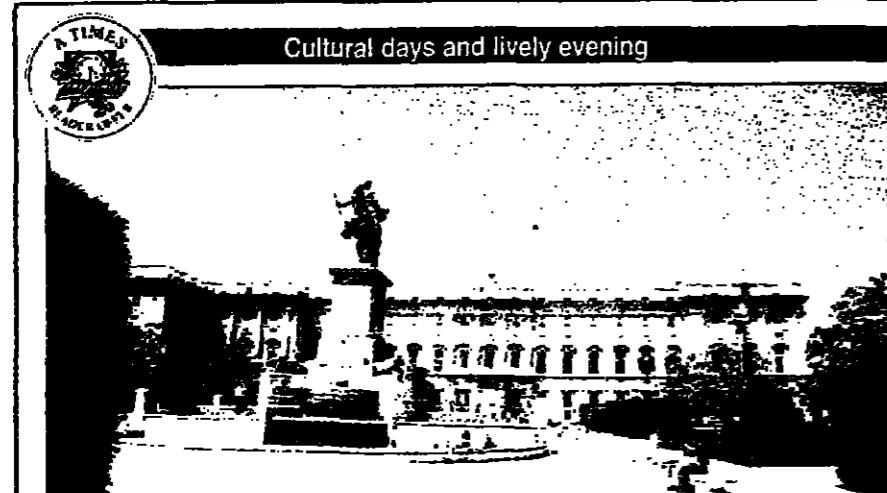
prankster. Samuel L. Jackson exerts stronger appeal as a Harlequin shopkeeper who becomes Willis's sidekick, though their bantering scenes belong in a different film. Plenty of action but no dramatic focus. Available to rent.

■ A SIMPLE TWIST OF FATE

Buena Vista, PG, 1994

WRITER-producer-star Steve Martin takes the plot of *Silas Marner* and weaves it into an ambitious dramatic comedy about babies lost and found and a miser's redemption. The mix does not really work, but odd scenes are endearing; and in his first American venture, British director Gillies Mackinnon acquits himself well. With Gabriel Byrne and Catherine O'Hara. Available to rent.

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Jobim: own soundscape

version arranged by Claus Ogerman, the definitive rendering performed with Stan Getz and João Gilberto and a magical encounter with Joe Henderson at Carnegie Hall, recorded months before Jobim's death. *Corcovado*, *Invensões*, *Vivo Sôhando* and, naturally, *The Girl from*

Ipanema are similarly recycled. It says much for the subtlety of the apparently uncomplicated melodies that they easily withstand such close scrutiny. And though the instrumental parts that make up the second disc — most of them dating from the early 1960s — tend to be a

counterflow of melody — fragmented, repeated, spun into endless sequences, stretched out, contracted and positively saturating all the voice parts. Rhythmic stability and melodic vitality co-exist in hypnotic balance and are realised superbly in the firm yet supple textures of the Tallis Scholars' four tenors, two basses and two sopranos, artfully balanced and paced by Peter Phillips.

■ HEINRICH SCHÜTZ

Geistliche Chormusik

Collegium Vocale/

Herreweghe

Harmonia Mundi

HMC 9015244**

Poverty and famine were rife and the Dresden court chapel was reduced to rubble. As German musicians, artists and writers searched for their response in the last year of the Thirty Years War, Heinrich Schütz composed a set of "small and simple works" — setting extracts from Luther's Biblical texts in the simple, declamatory style he had learnt from Gabrieli in Venice. The *Kleine geistliche Konzerte* of 1636-39 remain some of the most spare and eloquent examples of the sacred vocal music of that time, and half a dozen of them are dropped, jewel-like, into this recording of Schütz's later motets from the *Geistliche Chormusik*.

So, in among the light-filled contrapuntal singing of the Collegium Vocale appears a tender, impetuous duet, *Create in me a clean heart*, sung by soprano Agnes Mellon and tenor Mark Padmore; and the drowsy descent of sleep creeps through the voices of Padmore and bass Peter Kooy. There is

no dearth of recordings of both these collections: but few offer such eloquent selection and performance as this one.

CHORAL

Hilary Finch

JACOB OBERHET

Missa Maria Zari

Tallis Scholars/Philips

EMI CDC 0324**

If you have 70 minutes this weekend, prepare to put them aside to do nothing but listen, without distraction, to one of the longest, most mesmerising settings of the Mass ever written. Jacob Obrecht worked as a composer in Flanders in the last years of the 15th century. Then, on his way to the court in Ferrara, where, within a matter of weeks, he was to die of the plague, he wrote this all-absorbing Mass, based on a Tyrolean hymn melody.

Tenete Muri, rose without thorn. It is thought to be his swansong, and the Tallis Scholars honour both Obrecht's memory and the catalogue with this fine recording. To enter Obrecht's sound world is to immerse yourself in an unique flow and

Age is strictly 19th century and several of the numbers are those Joan Sutherland recorded 35 years ago under the title *The Art of the Prima Donna*, a set which spurred her international reputation.

Swenson's soprano is already heavier than Sutherland's was then, and it shows in a number such as Juliet's Waltz Song from Gounod's treatment of the lovers of Verona. There is a lack of glibness, but Swenson has first-class technique and shares with Sutherland the ability to end a vocal firework display with an extra large rocker. Try the Donizetti numbers from *Lucia* and *Linda di Chamounix*.

The Bellini arias, from *Puritani* and *Sonnambula*, are accomplished but chill. Elvira's plea for hope, or failing that, death, needs more emotion, although the following cabaletta is full of energy.

It would have done better to have begged pardon for the indifferent background article which manages to comment on a number of arias not included on the disc.

CHORAL

Barry Millington

recordings made by Graziella Scutti in her late twenties. Scutti's problem was that at the very same time Callas was beginning to give an entirely new dimension to Bellini. By comparison she sounds superficial.

She was much happier with spikier ladies who did not go mad or start sleepwalking at the first setback. Scutti was a Glyndebourne pet in the 1950s mainly for her Mozart performances and for Costé in particular. Despina's two arias are here, very fresh and sharply pointed. So is Zerlina, with George London as a gruff Giovanni. Scutti is not up to Sembranides' grand *Bel raggio*, but when she turns from Rossini to Donizetti, she shows what a vivacious and incisive interpreter she was.

A totally different side is shown in songs by Faure, Debussy and Ravel. Philips apologises for the sound quality here. It would have done better to have begged pardon for the indifferent background article which manages to comment on a number of arias not included on the disc.

OPERA

John Higgins

RUTH ANN SWENSON

Coloratura Arias from the Golden Age

London Philharmonic

Orchestra/Rescigno

EMI CDC 7 54827 2**

STOKOWSKI's orchestral transcriptions have about as much to do with their originals as does, say, *Kiss me, Kiss me, Kiss me* with *The Taming of the Shrew*. But that is not to deny that they are great fun.

César Franck's *Panis Angelicus* seems more saccharine than ever, while Chopin's modest Prelude in E Minor is injected with enough pathos to fill a Puccini opera. Debussy's *Clair de lune* is all rippling harps and Mantovani strings, but *La cathédrale engloutie* has a more sensational sound picture than you would ever have thought possible under water.

The Bach arrangements (*Sleep may safely graze*, *Wachet auf* and *Ein feste Burg*) have little perceptible connection with the Kantor of Leipzig, but the music (whoever's it is) sounds absolutely ravishing dressed in Stokowski's opulent garb.

The infamous Toccata and Fugue in D Minor is the most impossibly overblown of the lot. The Philadelphia Orchestra (Stokowski's own), now under Wolfgang Sawallisch —

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BROOK GREEN W14 Secure quiet modern 2 bed 2 bath flat with large reception £250,000. Tel 0171 605 6109.

BAKER ST 3 bed 2 bath charm high ceilings for lease or buy £350,000. Tel 0171 724 9912.

SEDFORD PR4 Manufactured motorhome 2 berth & bath. Tel 0171 724 9912. Have had V for car. £1,250. Tel 0171 724 9912.

CAMBRIDGE GARDENS LONDON W10. 2 bed 2 bath exceptional underground floor flat. Spacious living room, kitchen, garden, share of F/H, 5 mure tube & Notting Hill. £200,000. Private sale - no agents please. Tel: 0181 968 0018.

LANCASSTER GATE W2 Small 2 bed 1 1/2 bath flat with B/F. £105,000. Tel 0171 727 8612.

HAMPTONS Little Venice. 2 bed 2 bath flat with B/F. £105,000. Tel 0171 727 8612.

LITTLE VENICE - W9 A selection of executive 2 and 4 bedrooms and flats in the heart of Little Venice. 2 reception rooms, luxury fitted kitchen, family bathroom and en suite. £165,000 to £285,000. Tel 0171 724 9912.

REGENTS PARK NW1 2 bed 2 bath flat with B/F. £105,000. Tel 0171 727 8612.

PORTEBELL GATE W11. 2 bed 2 bath flat with B/F. £105,000. Tel 0171 727 8612.

WESTMINSTER County Hall, London SW1. Fully equipped 1 bedroom apartment in new development. 2 beds from £10,000. £12,000. Tel 0171 268 1811.

EALING Super 3/4 bed town house, spacious lounge/dining rm, 1.5 bed, 4th rm, luxury marble tiled bathroom, separate WC, garage & garden. Set on estate with beautiful gardens & panoramic views. £160,000. Freshfield. Tel 0181 997 8317. Home. 01895 632264 office hours.

W11 New conversion, 2 bed flats, reception room 21 x 15, kitchen 12 x 12, stairs 12 x 3, 2 bath. New 125 year lease. £189,500. Tel 0171 229 3955.

PUTNEY HEATH Spacious East West facing 2 bed, 2 rec, bath, shower, utility room in 2nd floor Tudor style apartment block. Central heating, lift, parking, 2nd floor balcony, 2nd floor garden. Executors fee. £179,500. Tel 01344 28900. For details Tel 01344 28900.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE 3 bed flat with B/F. £119,500. Tel 0171 723 9988.

WESTMINSTER County Hall, London SW1. Fully equipped 1 bedroom apartment in new development. 2 beds from £10,000. £12,000. Tel 0171 268 1811.

REGENTS PARK NW1 2 bed 2 bath flat with B/F. £105,000. Tel 0171 727 8612.

W2, HYDE PARK EST. Large 4 bed, 3 rec, 2 bath, 2 garage, 2nd floor, modernisation. £165,000. Tel 0171 726 1822.

W10, HYDE PARK 3 bed, 2 rec, 2 bath, 2 garage, 2nd floor, modernisation. £165,000. Tel 0171 726 1822.

W11, HYDE PARK 3 bed, 2 rec, 2 bath, 2 garage, 2nd floor, modernisation. £165,000. Tel 0171 726 1822.

W12, HYDE PARK 3 bed, 2 rec, 2 bath, 2 garage, 2nd floor, modernisation. £165,000. Tel 0171 726 1822.

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PROPERTY

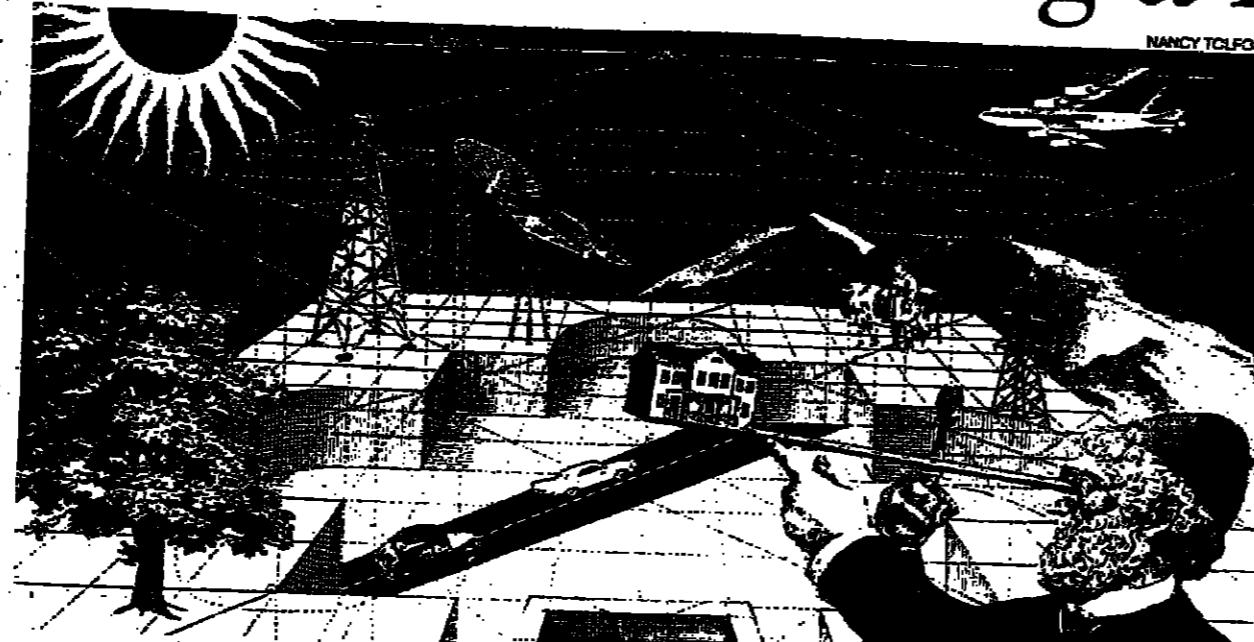
Perfect plot for building a house

Part one: how to check out a suitable site and then buy the land

Forget creaking, draughty Georgian piles that cost a mint to run. Stop hunting for that perfect neo-modern house — when you find one it probably won't be where you want it and there will be a dozen almost the same on the executive estate. Before the design plans of your dreams disappear for ever under the dust and rubble of a full-scale conversion of a nondescript prewar semi, consider what the diggers down-under do — build a house from scratch yourself.

A good size three-bedroom family house can be built for as little as £75,000, including materials and labour, if you are prepared to organise the construction work yourself. The architect's fee (between 8 and 15 per cent of the building costs), buying the land and landscaping will be extra.

First, you need land, preferably with outline planning consent. As site values can represent 50 or 60 per cent of a property's completed costs in some parts of the southeast, this will take a large chunk of your budget, but there are



NANCY TOLCROFT

bargains around. Many builders, unable to wait until the housing market improves, are cutting their losses by selling plots. Finding the right plot, however, is not easy. There are plenty on offer, but you will not find many For Sale boards. The best source of sites are local builders; farmers are also sometimes have plots.

Many local authorities have small infill sites between existing properties, or redundant school playing fields with outline planning consent.

Keep an open mind; the best

plot, but ensure the land is not contaminated by having a soil test done. Another approach is to find a dilapidated house on a good-sized plot, demolish it and rebuild.

Someone who owns a large garden might be prepared to sell a slice, particularly if it has good access and you pay cash.

If you want to approach an owner direct, your best information source is the local Land Registry, now required by law to disclose the ownership of any registered title for a fee.

There are also commercial land-finding companies.

Landbank Services provides

lists of estate agents, land agents, local authorities and auctioneers.

The price of a plot is determined by its size, location, availability of planning consent and how much of the land can be built on. Buying a site without approval for development means you risk being left with a worthless plot if planning permission is subsequently refused.

Sites with outline planning permission will often be limited by conditions that restrict building to a minimum. Others have existing legal covenants that prohibit construction. There may be a public

footpath running through it, inadequate access, or plans for a new road or development nearby. Your solicitor should check this.

Outline consent usually lapses after three years and may not be renewed, so check when it was granted with the local planning department. Land described as "a building plot" is not always suitable. If ground conditions are poor, special foundations will be needed. A structural engineer can advise you. Make sure essential services (mains water, drainage, gas and electricity) are readily available, or the cost of their provision could be prohibitive.

A site with a tree preservation order could pose problems. You also need to take account of large trees close to the house when putting in foundations.

If you are buying in a Conservation Area, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or a National Park, the house design may be restricted, and the planners may require you to use expensive traditional materials, such as local stone or slate.

The cheapest areas for building plots are the Scottish

Highlands and parts of rural Wales, the most expensive, apart from central London, is the Surrey stockbroker belt, where prices are at least five times higher than Scotland.

Landbank Services has a third-of-an-acre plot at Kinlochewe, near Loch Maree in Scotland, for £10,000, with outline planning consent for a single property.

Or you could buy a quarter-acre plot with essential services in Woodcote Park, Purley, Surrey, for £180,000 with consent for a chalet bungalow.

In south Devon, a fifth of an acre at Thurlestone, near the sea and an 18-hole golf course, costs £50,000 through Marchand Petit. It has outline consent for a three bedroom bungalow and essential services.

A half-acre plot at Kingswear, south Devon, is available for £100,000 through Strut & Parker. It occupies an elevated position overlooking the River Dart with outline consent for a four-bedroom house with an indoor pool.

On an even larger scale, Knight Frank is selling a 35 acre site in the Scottish borders, near St Boswells, for £35,000 with three new fish ponds and outline consent for a farmhouse and holiday chalets.

Moving upmarket, there are 14 acres in the New Forest near Fritham for £300,000 through Savills, with consent for a two-storey, four-bedroom, three-bathroom house.

Savills' Norfolk office is asking £30,000 for a single plot (0.14 acres) in the village of Swanton Novers in Norfolk, which has permission for a four-bedroom house and garage.

CHERYL TAYLOR

● Landbank Services, PO Box 2035, Reading, Berkshire RG1 2QZ (0734 61002); Marchand Petit 01548 857588; Strut & Parker 01322 215631; Knight Frank 0131-225 8171; Savills 01722 320422 or 01603 612211.

Next week: instructing an architect and building the house

FOR SALE

THATCHED HOUSES



£260,000

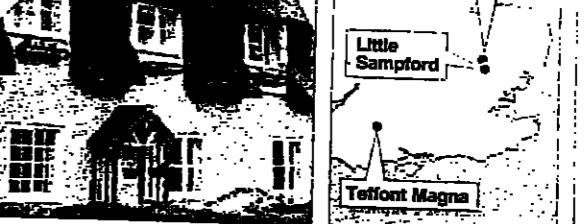
SUFFOLK
Maple House, Dullingham, near Newmarket. Grade II-listed, early 18th-century village house in a third of an acre of well-stocked gardens. Four bedrooms, two reception rooms, conservatory, kitchen/breakfast room and spa room. Garage. About £260,000 (Savills, 01284 767336)



£249,000

WILTSHIRE
Clarence Cottage, Teffont Magna. Picturesque cottage in lawned gardens with a detached barn, in a village conservation area on the edge of the Nadder valley. Five bedrooms, three bathrooms (two en suite), three reception rooms, study, kitchen/breakfast room and utility room, three-bathroom house.

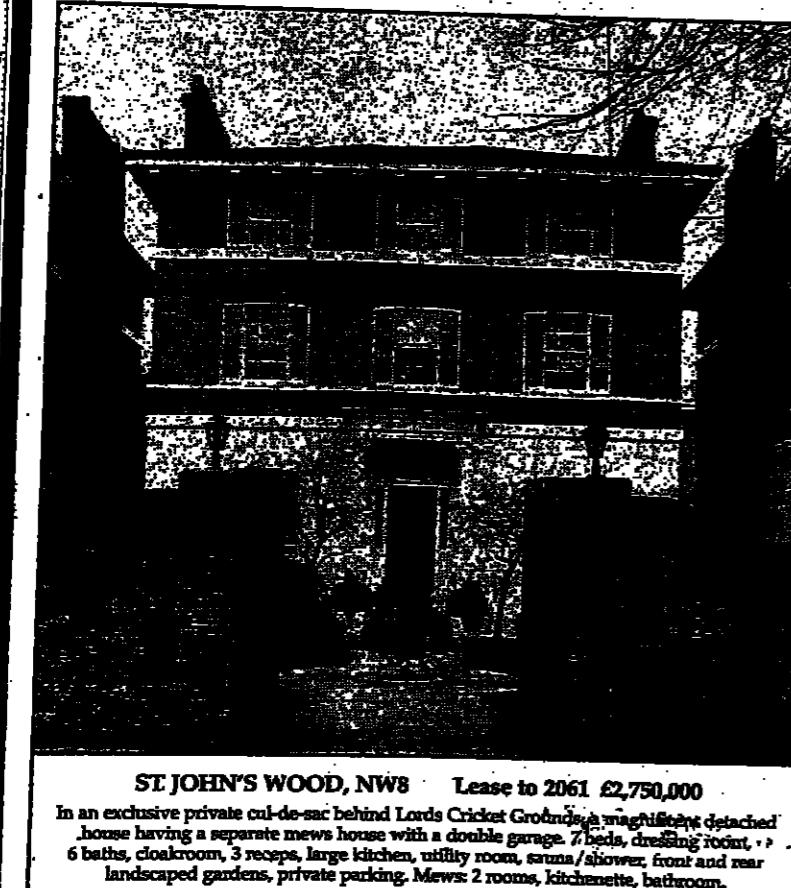
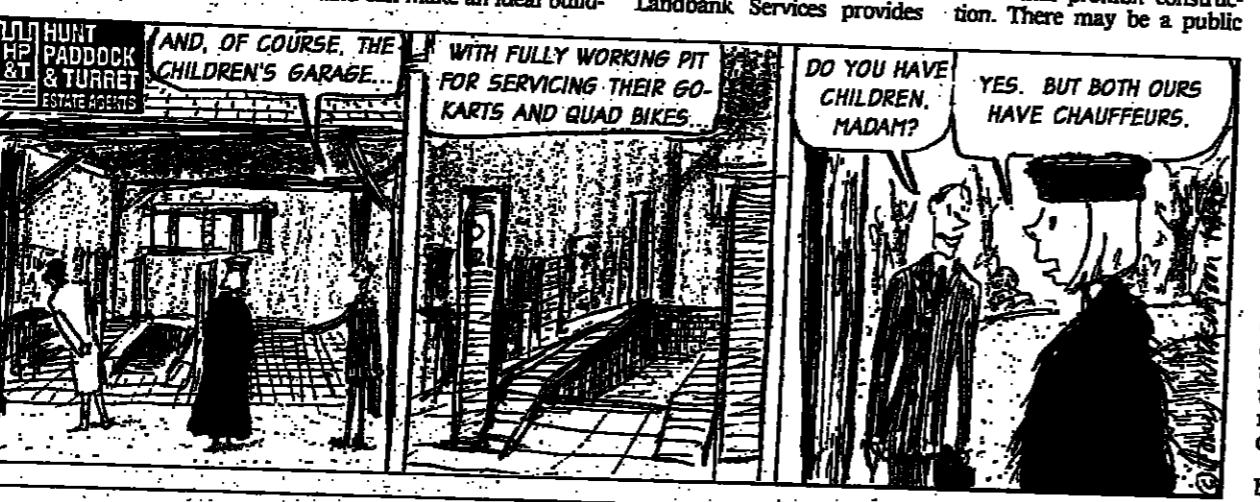
Teffont Magna office is asking £249,000 (Hunters' 01722 324422)



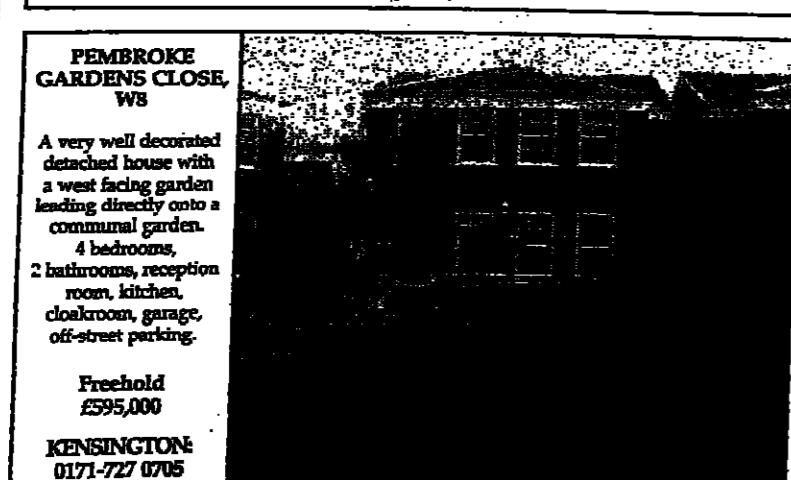
£160,000

ESSEX
Mill Cottage, Little Sampford. Grade-II listed, 18th-century timber-framed cottage with garden and country views. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms, (one en suite), two reception rooms, study, kitchen, utility and cloakroom. Garage/workshop. About £160,000 (Trembath Welch, 01371 872117)

CHERYL TAYLOR



ST JOHN'S WOOD, NW8 Lease to 2061 £2,750,000
In an exclusive private cul-de-sac behind Lord's Cricket Ground, a magnificent detached house having a separate mews house with a double garage, 7 beds, dressing room, 6 baths, cloakroom, 3 recs, large kitchen, utility room, sauna/shower, front and rear landscaped gardens, private parking. Mews: 2 rooms, kitchenette, bathroom, ST JOHN'S WOOD: 0171-722 5556



PEMBROKE GARDENS CLOSE, W8

A very well decorated detached house with a west facing garden leading directly onto a communal garden.
4 bedrooms,
2 bathrooms, reception room, kitchen, cloakroom, garage, off-street parking.

Freehold
£595,000

KENSINGTON:
0171-727 0705

JOHN D WOOD & CO.

LONDON AND COUNTRY ESTATE AGENTS

ESTABLISHED 1872



WILTSHIRE - Wardour Castle, Tisbury To let unfurnished
Apartments of 2 and 4 bedrooms, in an historic house set in 50 acres in an idyllic rural situation. Sympathetically restored, the apartments are of the highest quality ranging from 2500 to 4000 sq ft, with classical minimalist interiors, English oak floors, marble bathrooms, Czech & Speake fittings, Gaggenau appliances and comprehensive security systems. The grounds are being restored to the original designs of Woods and Capability Brown.

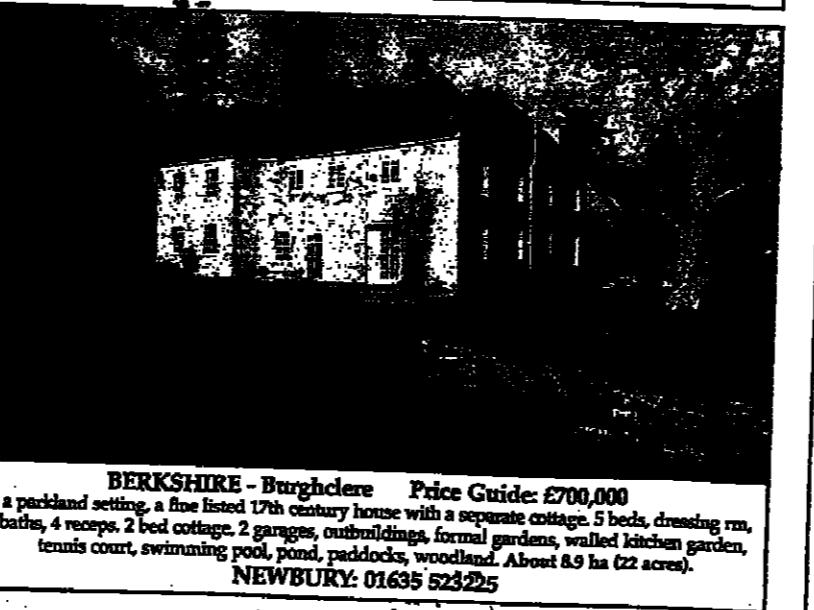
COUNTRY LETTING OFFICE: 01256 398004

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BATTERSEA: 0171-228 0174	HEAD OFFICE: 0171-493 4106
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FULHAM: 0171-731 4223	EARNHAM: 01252 737115
KENSINGTON: 0171-727 0705	LYMINGTON: 01990 677233
MAYFAIR: 0171-403 0855	NEWBURY: 01635 523225
ST JOHN'S WOOD: 0171-722 5556	OXFORD: 01865 311522
WANDSWORTH: 0181-871 3033	WINCHESTER: 01962 863131
WIMBLEDON: 0181-944 7172	HONG KONG: 00 852 2 872 5146

26 CURZON STREET, LONDON W1Y 8LD
0171-493 4106 FAX: 0171-629 6071

LETTINGS AND MANAGEMENT

To let your house or flat: Central London 0171-491 4311
North London 0171-722 3336 Wimbledon & Surrey 0181-946 9447
South of the M4 01256 398004 North of the M4 01865 311522

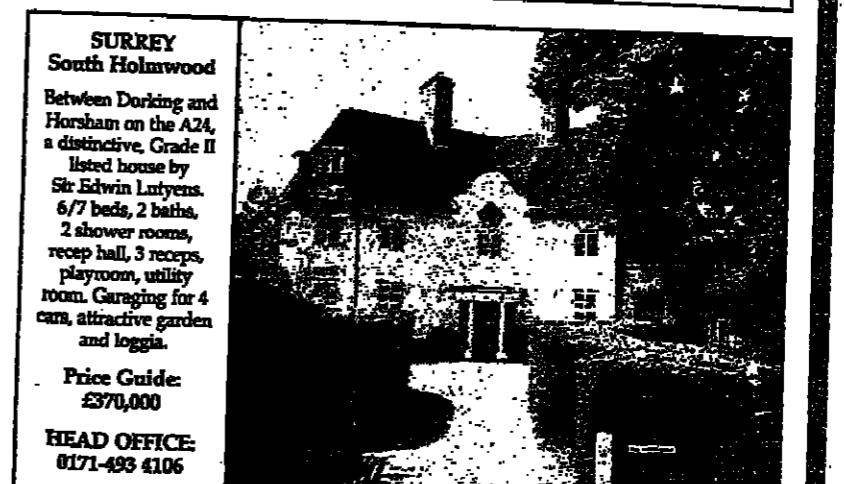
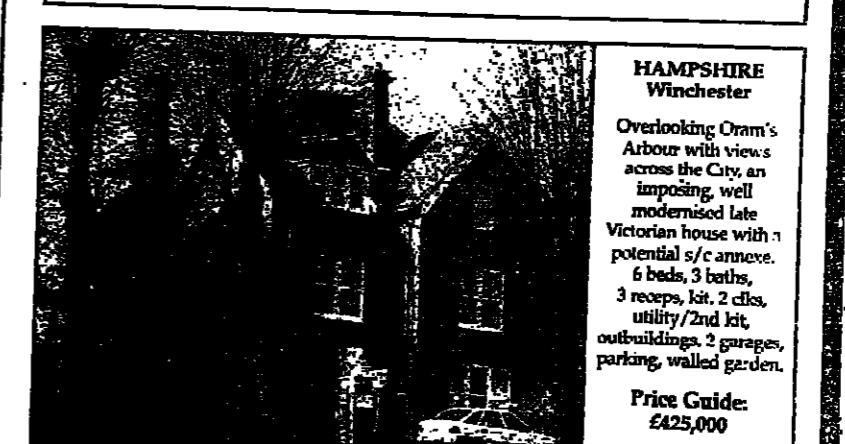


BERKSHIRE - Burghclere Price Guide: £700,000
In a parkland setting, a fine listed 17th century house with a separate cottage, 5 beds, dressing rm, 2 baths, 4 recs, 2 bed cottage, 2 garages, outbuildings, formal gardens, walled kitchen garden, tennis court, swimming pool, pond, paddocks, woodland. About 6.5 ha (22 acres). NEWBURY: 01635 523225



BELGRAVE PLACE, SW1 Lease to 2027 £1,500,000
On the 1st floor of an elegant building with views over Belgrave Square, an outstanding, spacious, well presented flat of over 307 sq m (3,300 sq ft), 2 principal beds, 2 baths, 2 recs/entertainment rooms, study, galleried library, separate guest flat, balcony, underground parking lift, resident caretaker.

BELGRAVIA: 0171-730 9854



SURVEY South Holmwood Between Dorking and Haslemere on the A24, a distinctive, Grade II listed house by Sir Edwin Lutyens. 6/7 beds, 2 baths, 2 shower rooms, rec room, 3 recs, playroom, utility room. Gating for 4 cars, attractive garden and loggia.

Price Guide: £425,000
WINCHESTER: 01962 863131
HEAD OFFICE: 0171-493 4106

12

OUTDOORS

Superyachts on the crest of a wave

Sailing

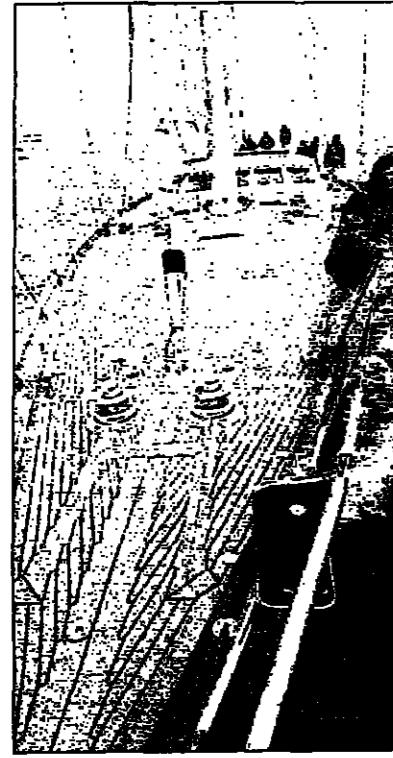
Just for a moment, on a bitterly cold day in the Solent, there was a breath of the warm Caribbean. In a light, north-westerly wind, *Yanneke Too* glided along, heeling gently as her acres of sail caught the breeze and the sun cast a golden shadow across her sweeping expanse of teak deck.

It was easy to imagine this most elegant of yachts on a turquoise sea under a really warm sun — the ultimate cruising machine in the ultimate cruising ground.

Charlie Dwyer, the professional skipper from Newport, Rhode Island, who heads a full-time crew of five on this latest "superyacht" from a British yard, took his gloved hands off the wheel to bang some heat back into them.

"I've been on a few of them and this one is absolutely beautiful," he said. On the foredeck, Mike Hallacher, a crew member, seemed to be playing with the remote control of a model aeroplane. But he was actually using a hand-held keyboard to unfurl one of the boat's huge mainsails.

GILL ALLEN



The VAT bill on *Yanneke Too*'s two boats alone was £26,000

Yanneke Too fact file

Overall length: 116ft 6in (39ft 4in on the waterline). Width: 20ft. Draught: 9ft 6in. Displacement: 128 tonnes. Engine: 470 horsepower converted Japanese digger. Upwind sail area: a massive 5,837sq ft on a Schooner rig. Twin masts of carbon fibre; the hull has a cedar wood core with laminates of GRP and Kevlar for extra strength.

impressive bill on the two boats — custom-built in New Zealand — which for VAT alone came to £26,000.

The yacht has a clean, sleek and timeless look. The interior is stunning. She is fitted out for 12 people, six crew forward and six guests aft, including the owner in a double state room with an adjoining study and ensuite bathroom. There is a tremendous feeling of space throughout the boat, which is finished in cherry wood with burr maple inlays in the paneling in the owner's areas.

Bill Dixon has achieved his brief of creating an elegant feel.

"This boat should feel very homely," he said as we reclined in the lower saloon, made up of three sofas arranged on one side and a dining area on the other, exploiting the 26ft width of the boat to the full. The entertainment console was 6ft tall. The TV arose magically from the sideboard at the flick of yet another remote keypad.

"Although she's large, she is not intimidating," said Dixon. "She's something you feel quite comfortable with."

The galley resembled a small kitchen you might find in a well-furnished flat and was filled with the latest power-hungry cooking technology. Sarah Thomson, *Yanneke Too*'s full-time stewardess, was effusive about the boat's safety and comfort. During a recent trial in 25 knots of wind she had spent the day down below doing the ironing.

Yanneke Too, designed by Southampton-based Bill Dixon, has taken more than two years to build. She was ordered by a publicity-shy European multi-millionaire businessman who only allowed journalists on board if they undertook, in writing, not to reveal his identity. It is said that he plans to keep her initially in the Caribbean, from where she will venture into the Pacific and as far north as Alaska.

And as if this superyacht had not displayed enough of its desirable qualities, he pointed out three more modest selling points: "A lot of these guys are hard-pressed executives. This saves their heart, their marriage and their kids."

EDWARD GORMAN

Next week: Sailing up the Thames to Tower Bridge

Jill Parkin reports on one of the long-term problems of food biotechnology

EP/David Hoffman



Genetic engineering might mean herbicide-resistant wheat but the result could be a chemical cocktail with an unknown price. Below: pernicious black grass

Chips and genes on the menu



They are sitting ready for us on the laboratory shelf — potatoes, sugar beet and oilseed rape, none quite as nature intended. Scientists have taken a gene from here, put a gene in there, and produced crops which are resistant to some herbicides. Other crops, even wheat, are only a test-tube or two away.

The basic idea sounds good. It means that farmers can spray a whole field, crop and weeds, with a simple and environmentally safe weedkiller, saving time and money.

But once licences are granted to do this, the short-term benefits could soon give way to long-term problems. Put simply, crops and weeds tend to interbreed, and if herbicide resistance is passed on to the weeds, the simple and safe weedkiller becomes redundant. Something stronger will be needed.

Bill Starling, the deputy director of British Organic Farmers, says: "Genetic tampering is like taking the stopper out of a perfume bottle: it releases a genie of uncertain temper and unknown power."

"Producing herbicide-tolerant crops means using more non-renewable resources to produce more chemicals for deliberate introduction into the environment. By interfering with nature we are storing up a lot of long-term problems for short-term gain."

This short-term gain horrifies Vicki Hird, of the Sustainable Agriculture Food and Environment Alliance (SAFE), which represents 33 groups with farming, environmental, animal welfare and education interests. "Why do we need it?" she asks.

One of the answers is in a report by the biotechnology working party of the National Farmers' Union. Genetically modified potatoes would have improved flavour, mash texture and

evenness of fry colour, it says. Those of green persuasion might think we could get by without such attributes.

In the long term, it will increase the level of herbicides used," Ms Hird says. "The big beneficiaries are the biotech companies — the same companies which produce the herbicide-resistant crops and the herbicides. This means that the farmer gets the whole package. He is controlled by the companies."

Herbicide-resistant crops could be sprayed with products that are hardly used on crops at the moment because they are so basic and strong that they kill anything green. Glyphosate, ammonium and glyphosate, sold as Basta and Round-Up, are environmentally "fairly benign", says Clare Gosling, the food science adviser to the NFU. "They're general, not specific. They have low toxicity, don't stay around long and bio-degrade into a non-harmful compound."

"But it would be a real problem if more than one tolerance occurred. You would then have to use a chemical cocktail to kill off the weeds."

But resistance can occur naturally, she says. As the weeds fight to survive, it's the ones with some natural resistance which multiply. It's a problem wheat farmers already have, particularly with the pernicious black grass, a weed whose black "rat's tails" stand out dramatically against the crop. Naturally occurring herbicide-resistant weeds in wheat fields are, literally, a growing problem.

A further problem occurs when you use a field for a herbicide-resistant crop and then reuse it for another crop the next year. Remnants of last year's crop become weeds, very tough ones.

At the moment, the gene is still in the bottle. None of the products has yet been commercially licensed in Britain, though the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) says that some limited licences have been granted for testing. The whole issue, a MAFF spokesman says, is with the European Commission.

It would be wrong to portray the farmers as nothing but environmental baddies, poised with a jar of chemical nasties, their eyes on bigger profit margins. Although the report by the NFU biotechnology working party considers herbicide-tolerant weeds "a low risk", the NFU says it is worried for the long term and does not want the responsibility to be left to farmers.

The organisation would like to see a government policy and "clarification of liability for any environmental harm resulting from release to the environment of genetically modified organisms".

Mr Starling would prefer more cash to be spent on producing natural crops: cash in the shape of a big boost to the organic aid scheme the Government introduced in 1994.

"Chemically produced food is far more expensive than most people realise," he says. "When you buy organic apples and turnips you're paying all the costs involved, but when you buy chemically produced fruit and vegetables you are not paying anything towards clearing up after those apples and turnips which have made a chemical mess."

Beauties that beat the fashion cult

Feather report

The great crested grebe

IN THE 1850s there was a fashion among women for "grebe furs" made of the beautiful plumage of the great crested grebe. The birds were massacred in large numbers and by the end of the decade there were thought to be only 32 pairs left in Britain.

Bird protection was then in its infancy but determined legislation saved the species. By the 1930s the population was back to a thousand or so pairs, assisted by a spread of the birds westward across Europe. Since then, with an increase of suitable waters caused by the flooding of old gravel pits, it has increased to 5,000 pairs.

You can find at least one pair on most large waters in the south of England and the Midlands, and here and there in other parts of the country. They are conspicuous in mid-February, back in summer plumage, with black ear tufts and a silvery chestnut ruff tipped with black high on their

slender necks. When they look directly at you they have an evil appearance, with their threatening, sharp-pointed bill and their black ear tufts meeting in front like a devil mask.

On the back, they are black tinged with brown. Underneath they are pure white. When they roll over to preen they look like a bundle of silvery white feathers floating on the water.

They are now forming into pairs and the courting couples put on a dramatic display. They swim up and face each other and shake their heads vigorously, with the ear tufts lifted and the brilliant ruff spread out.

On a windy February day, these adornments are blown about and their heads look like woolly mops. While they are displaying, they make curious clicking sounds, and between bouts of head-shaking they have sessions of vigorous, formalised preening.

ing both earlier and later. Two years ago I found a bird sitting on eggs at the beginning of February, and last year I was astonished to see one with a small chick in early January. This last bird was probably a late autumn nester, still in the previous summer's breeding plumage, rather than an early spring nester. Where I saw the chick was also dramatic: it was sitting on its parent's back. Grebes sometimes carry their chicks like this to protect them from predators, who, when it comes to grebes, are as heartless as fashionable women seem to have been 150 years ago.

DERWENT MARSH

• What's about: *Birds* — watch out for rooks rebuilding nests. *Twitchers* — white-throated diver at Staithes Harbour, North Yorkshire; male black-throated thrush at Webhead, Worcestershire. Details from Birdline, 0891 702222. Calls cost 40p a minute, cheap rates 50p a minute at all other times.



Chartwell, Kent, was the family home of Sir Winston Churchill from 1922

The Times/NPI National Heritage Awards

Since the launch of the National Heritage Awards last autumn, readers of *The Times* have nominated more than 160 properties which they consider to be the best in the British Isles.

The awards, in association with pensions specialist NPI, now moves onto the voting stage and today we publish a voting form right containing the 10 short-listed finalists. You can also vote for *The Times* Family award, by selecting a property you consider makes a special effort to entertain and inform adults and children.

The winning property will be presented with a crystal trophy by Lord Inglewood, under secretary of state at the Department of National Heritage, at a gala reception in London in April. By registering your vote, you will automatically be entered into a prize draw for the chance to attend the ceremony with a guest.

Coffee table books illustrating historic buildings, worth £20 each, will go to 20 runners-up.

Please tick one only:

The Times/NPI National Heritage Awards, Spero Communications, Grampian House, Meridian Gate, Marsh Wall, London E14 9XT. Closing date is Saturday, March 2, 1996.



THE NATIONAL HERITAGE AWARDS																	
Name _____	Address _____																
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I would like to vote for the following properties. Please mark 1, 2 and 3 in the spaces provided. 1 being the overall winner, 2 and 3 place.																	
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SHOPPING

Happy new

year for Soho



Gerrard Street's red-and-gold pagoda arches welcome you to Chinatown, where the windows are crammed with varnished ducks
Chinatown, speciality shops, a market and bustling streets — Soho has it all

London's Chinatown will come spectacularly alive during next week's Chinese New Year — adding even more bustle and colour to Soho, where it is situated.

Soho is one of the friendliest and most misunderstood places in London; its small area of sleaze often grabbing the biggest headlines.

Chinatown is separated from the rest of Soho by Shaftesbury Avenue, but there is no mistaking it when you arrive: pagoda-like arches span each end of Gerrard Street, the lamp-posts and litter bins are red and gold, and huge, stone lion-dogs snarl at you. What the Chinese think of the Lego-like telephone boxes is anyone's guess. Window after window in Gerrard Street is crammed with glowing racks of varnished ducks. There are dozens of Chinese restaurants here, but the best value is China China, an unglamorous and brightly lit place (be prepared to share a table) where two people can fill themselves with delicious Cantonese food for about £10 (two dishes plus rice and tea). The Lido restaurant is also worth a visit; superb meals are served from 11.30am until 4.30pm. Everything you need for home Chinese cooking is available from the large and enticing supermarket Loon Fung.

Everywhere you hear the distinctive twang of Chinese pop music, available from



Reverse-dial clock at Anything Left Handed.



Right: heady aromas lure shoppers into the Algerian Coffee Stores

Sound of China, which has thousands of Chinese CDs from £10.

Leaving Chinatown via Wardour Street, you arrive at Brewer Street. About halfway down is Anything Left Handed, a tiny shop selling not only the expected — scissors (still its best-selling item at £5.95), tin-openers (£1.95), corkscrews (£14.95) and serrated knives (£7.95-£35.95) — but also such items as a clock with all the numerals in reverse (£19.95), a boomerang (£12.95) and a scythe (£56.95). The shop runs 'The Left-Handers Club' — and recently persuaded Lloyds Bank to introduce a back-to-front cheque book.

Also in Brewer Street is the Vintage Magazine Company — an addictive shop whose

lower floor is devoted to back issues (sometimes ancient) of every collectable publication from *Beano* (£1-£150 each) to *Playboy* from £8. Original film posters range from £2 to around £500 (*The Great Escape* is £125). Upstairs is the domain of the cult: still photographs £3, repro posters (around £8) and T-shirts (£10) featuring such idols as Kojak, Frankie Howard, Charlie's Angels, Starsky and Hutch. They also have great 10in models of the Beatles (£130).

Just off Brewer Street (beyond Raymond's Revue Bar) is Berwick Street market, open daily except Sunday, selling mainly fruit, veg and flowers. Go there in the late afternoon for bargains — £1 for six avocados. Here too is the shop Simply Sausages. The best seller in a range of 35 is Heaps No 1 (Mr Heap is the proprietor, and here is a classic 90-per-cent-meat pork banger at £2.99 a pound); for Burns Night they sold 100lb of haggis (not to the same person).

Camisa and Son in Old Compton Street is a shoebox-sized, traditional Italian deli — always packed and with a long queue outside — offering, among many other delicacies, the finest Parmesan cheese cut from huge truckles at only £6.99 a pound.

What about a drink? Gerry's Club in Dean Street, now 40 years old, is a haven for actors, writers and musicians — apply for membership if you qualify. At No 58, Dean Street Records — with thousands of lovely old LPs — specialises in film soundtracks, shows and such vocalists as Sinatra and



Chinese-style phone booth

Eydie Gorme, James Bond is highly collectable (£10-£90), as are cult film albums such as *Barbarella*, *The Italian Job* and *Bullitt* (about £40 each).

Back in Old Compton Street is the Algerian Coffee Stores — a beautiful shop established in 1887, ready with the strong aroma of 60 coffees and 140 teas. The most popular coffee is a high-roast blend of South American and Central American beans called Velluto Nero at £2.60 for half a pound. Excellent espresso and cappuccino are available to drink on the premises, and the shop also sells all manner of tea and coffee-making paraphernalia.

Before succumbing to the joys of dinner, have a look in P. Denny, a splendid old oak-panelled shop specialising in clothes for the catering trade: boring things such as aprons,

yes — but also chic double-breasted chef's jackets with Nehru collars and buttons in any colour you like at just £13.95. And why haven't the fashion pages plundered the blue-and-white check chef's trousers at £7.50 and striped waistcoats (£27.50)?

Garments of a very different nature abound at Agent Provocateur in Broadwick Street. This is a seriously sexy shop selling all sorts of upmarket lingerie in deep pink, purple and turquoise and aqua-green. Marilyn Monroe is in the window, bending over a chair wearing exceedingly abbreviated underwear — stopping the traffic, not for the first time.

Prices range from £9 for stockings ("We don't sell tights — not sexy") to hundreds for a feather-trimmed negligée. Batches of six pairs of 1950s nylons are available in their original boxes at £90.

Time to cool down and perhaps to fill up at one of Soho's long-established restaurants. L'Escargot in Greek Street — opened in 1927 — has just received a well-merited Michelin rosé (from £70 for a dinner for two, with wine). Or try L'Epicure, in Frith Street — opened in 1953 — a restaurant that has barely changed since those nylon stockings were made. Dishes such as entrecôte Diane (£8) are cooked to order at your table. Two flaming torches guide you to this fine restaurant — welcome beacons after all this tramping around.

JOSEPH CONNOLLY



The Vintage Magazine Company has back issues of everything from *Beano* to *Playboy*

● Telephone numbers have the prefix 0171 unless stated otherwise.) China China, 3 Gerrard Street (439 7502); Lido Restaurant, 41 Gerrard Street (437 4431); Loon Fung, 42 Gerrard Street (437 7179); Sound of China, 6 Gerrard Street (734 1970); Anything Left Handed, 57 Brewer Street (437 3910); Vintage Magazine Company, 39-43 Brewer Street (439 8525); Simply Sausages, 93 Berwick Street (287 3482); Gerry's Club, 52 Dean Street (437 4160); No 58, Dean Street Records (437 4500); Camisa and Son, 61 Old Compton Street (437 7610); Algerian Coffee Stores, 52 Old Compton Street (437 2480); P Denny &

FACT FILE

Co. 39 Old Compton Street (437 1654); Agent Provocateur, 6 Broadwick Street (439 0229); L'Epicure, 28 Frith Street (437 2629); L'Escargot, 48 Greek Street (437 0790).

● The Chinese New Year, Year of the Rat, starts on Monday. Celebrations will be on Sunday, February 25. The Lion Dance begins about 1.10pm in Leicester Square and continues into Chinatown, followed by a display of martial arts at about 1.30pm. For more details ring 0171-734 5161. Other cities celebrating on February 25 include: Manchester (0161-236 4515); Liverpool (0151-708 8833); Newcastle (0191-232 8520).

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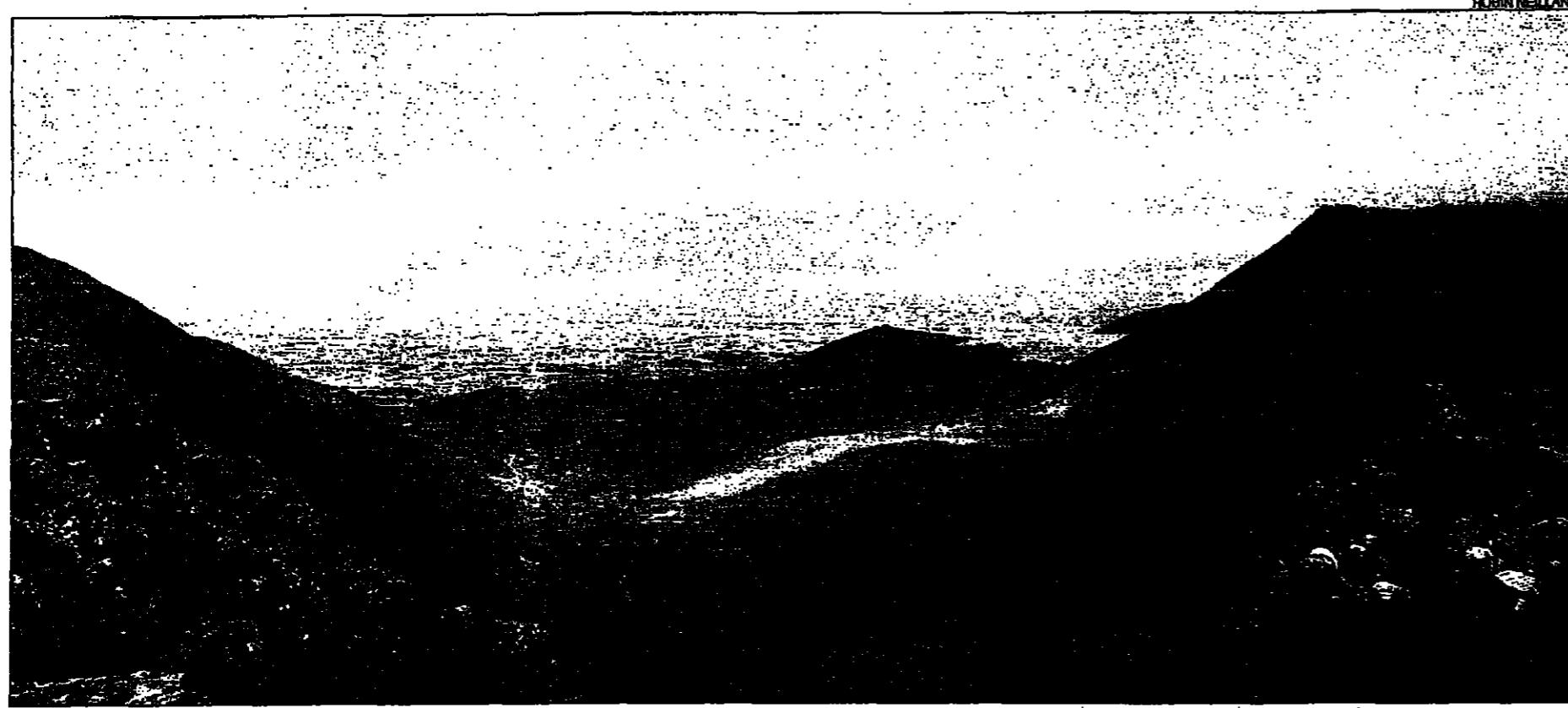
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WEEKEND SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

16

TRAVEL

IRELAND AND WALES: Struggling up a mountain in Co Kerry and going down a mine in Gwynedd



A panoramic view of the west coast of Ireland from half way up Carrauntoohil in Co Kerry. From the base to the 3,000m summit and back, takes four to six hours

Devil's way to the top

Whenever I walk across a country I have to climb the highest peak that lies along the way. This has long been a matter of principle and is one of the reasons why I avoid Nepal. I have been up Ben Nevis and Snowdon and the Mulhacen in Spain, so when I walked across Ireland I had to climb Carrauntoohil.

When I say "climb" I mean "walk". The nylon rope and piton are not for me; I can even get a bit unsteady on a stepladder. Fortunately, most mountains can be climbed the pretty way: up a footpath, and when you get to the top the views are just the same. Having said that, the views from Carrauntoohil depend on the weather, when it's good you can see the Ring of Kerry, the Purple Mountain, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and the glorious west coast of Ireland. The day I went up you could see for well yards.

Carrauntoohil is spelt in a number of ways, including Corran Tuathail, but at least you can pronounce it. Two neighbouring peaks are called Cloughfauanglibbaun, and Knocknafreasham and are, therefore, avoided for that

reason. If you can't say where you have been, what's the point of going there?

Carrauntoohil is not very high. It rises to about 1,000 metres (3,280ft). A notice in the car park at the bottom says that you can get to the top and back in four hours. That must be for an active goat wearing an aquaplane. When I was there, the rain was coming down in stair rods, and I had a terrible cold. I had to hang about in a pub for four days waiting for decent weather, and became a martyr to hangovers. A day on the hill was just what I needed, but this particular day was the one I should have avoided.

Like most mountains, the way to the Carrauntoohil summit starts with the walk to "base camp". This was in a farmyard, where I had an encounter with an amorous donkey. The walk led beside a



Carrauntoohil fact file

□ Carrauntoohil stands on the Iveragh peninsula of Co Kerry, southwest Ireland, close to the town of Killarney. The nearest big town is Killarney. Bed and breakfast accommodation is widely available around Killarney from £15 (£14 per night).

□ Full details of holidays and walking routes in the west of Ireland are available from the Bord Failte, The Irish Tourist Board, 150 New Bond Street, London, W1Y 0AQ (0171-493 3201).

foaming stream to the Hags Glen. Here the rain was coming down horizontally, as they say round here, and the wind snatched my map away. This was not a problem, because I could see the mountain ahead, and the white scar on the face that had to be the Devil's Ladder. This was said to be the best way to the top, even if the name was a bit off-putting.

The next task was to cross the river Gaddagh, which was, of course, in spate. The

ford under deep water so I crossed on some high but slippery rocks. Once across I found that the real river was further up, so I crossed back, using the ever-popular frantic leap method. Frantic leaps in soaking trousers are rarely successful: I fell short and into the river and suffered a sense of humour failure.

It is some measure of the weather that it was wetter out of the river than in, but I poured the Gaddagh out of my trousers and squelched on

towards the Ladder. As I got closer I could make out specks moving slowly up and down the mountain side, a comforting indication that I was not the only fool on the hill that day.

I could also see that the Ladder was an almost vertical rock and scree slope, with a stream running down it. Falling water was throwing drifts of spray across the rock and I could see no obvious way up.

On a dry day, climbing the Ladder might be no more than a gentle scramble. On a wet day the Ladder doubles as a waterfall. Every time I grabbed a rock, a stream of muddy water shot up my sleeve and small stones and large rocks came bouncing past my head, to add a little terror to the day. I do not exaggerate. The Devil's Ladder is not the North Face of the Eiger – it only felt like it.

The only way up any steep path is to pick the easiest route, take short steps and keep going. This method eventually got me to a grassy plateau where an Irish family were having a picnic. This was on a terrible day and in a "one hand for the egg sandwich, and one hand for yourself" sort of spot. But then, the Irish can be like that.

"Thank God that's over," I said, flopping on the grass. "Could I ask you to take my photograph?"

ROBIN NEILLANDS

Answers from page 25

HAKENKREUZ

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MOJO

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KERGUELEN

TRAVEL

SKIING: Alastair Brett's glasses steam up on a singles holiday, and Doug Sager gives a safety warning

Sloping off alone on a downward track

My wife and I last went skiing six years ago. By then she had decided that "not being able to stop" was a problem, even on those sky-blue days when the sun sparkles on the snow, the panorama is breathtaking and the silence of the piste is pure magic.

Her decision not to ski again was a relief: early morning reconnoitring to find the gentlest of blue runs and the endless wait for her to catch up were beginning to take their toll. So this time, on a singles-type holiday to Verbier.

Verbier, at 1,500m, is one of those up-market Swiss resorts where the British have skied for years. Much of its old-world charm has gone and these days it is a huge sprawl of large chalets with fashion shops, parked Range Rovers and expensive furs.

A favourite with keen skiers, its four valleys are linked with the resorts of Nendaz, Thyon 2000, Veysnaz and La Tzoumaz. The 400km of piste and trails comprise 40 per cent for novices (green/blue runs), 42 per cent for intermediate skiers (red runs) and the remaining 18 per cent for experts (black runs).

Many of the lower, north-facing slopes among the trees at Savoieires, Nendaz and Thyon are a pure pleasure to ski given good snow. The higher, steeper slopes above Verbier, from the steep, black mogul fields at the summit of Mont-Fort (more than 3,000m) to the more gentle red runs down to La Chaux, demand a variety of techniques.

Queuing at some lifts in high season is inevitable, particularly at bottlenecks, such as Torin, but one of Verbier's advantages is that it is only 170km from Geneva airport, about two hours by car or coach up into the Alps.

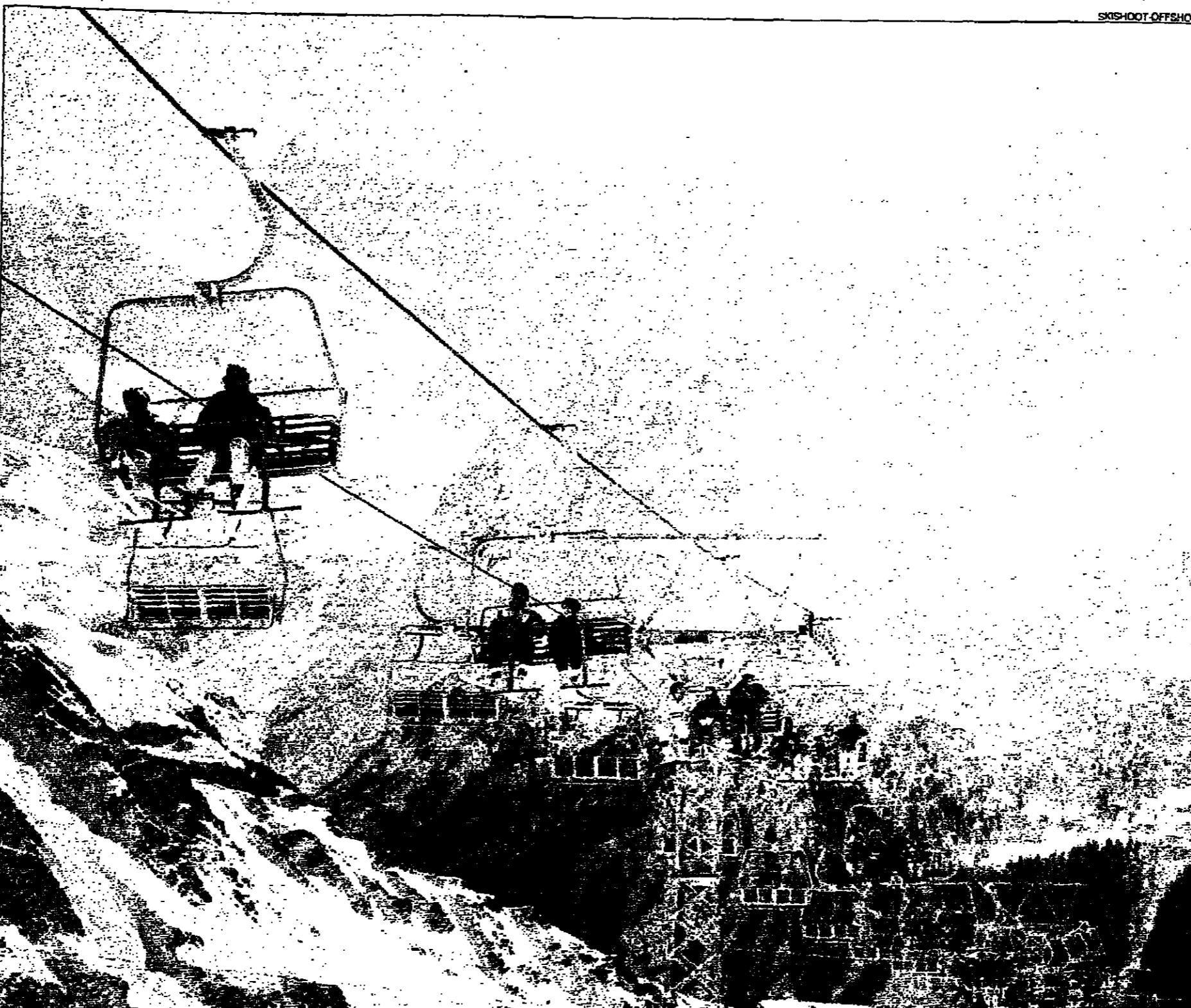
For genuine singles the large Clarmont Chalet is likely to be first choice because it has so many single rooms. But the smaller, cosier La Diure chalet was where I found myself with six other young professionals in their thirties.

Our chalet girl, Maddy, had travelled extensively and could ruin a waistline in seconds with her wonderful creamy cakes in the afternoon and gallons of wine with the meal in the evening.

On the first day, the Bladon Lines ski guides, Richard and Allen, showed clients of intermediate to advanced level around the slopes. This was a good way to meet people from other chalets, from a tank fitter at Vickers to a couple of chatty school teachers from Surrey.

The packed lunches came out at midday, high up on a sunny ridge above Thyon, with panoramic views towards the Matterhorn.

On the second day, I decided to take up the Ski Club of Great Britain's offer of a free day's skiing with their rep over the Four Valleys. The Ski Club has reps in 34 of the main resorts around Europe. They are all proficient skiers, who provide a friendly face for British skiers and help to



The beautiful scenery above Verbier is one of the Swiss resort's big attractions for skiers. High up on Mont-Fort (3,000m) there are panoramic views towards the Matterhorn

guide people around the slopes. After trying a day's skiing, you are asked if you would like to join the club — £41 for those living out of London and £44-£45 for those in the London area. For this, a member has the opportunity to ski with the club's reps throughout their holiday, and to benefit from an extensive information service about resorts, snow conditions and discounts on holidays and ski equipment.

I spent the last two days skiing with the others from my chalet, a mix of intermediate to advanced skiers. We skied together on most of the runs in the area.

When it came to *après-ski*, the others, being more serious skiers and appreciating the need for rest, left me to my own devices.

I soon found out that on Mondays all the tour company

Fact file

The author was guest of Bladon Lines, 56/58 Putney High Street, London SW15 ISF (0181-783 313) and the Verbier Tourist Office.

He stayed in Verbier at La Diure chalet: £369 per person full chalet board for one week, including flights and transfers from Geneva. But look for special offers or less expensive chalets, such as Tom Kitten, or Clarmont Chalet with its single rooms.

The Verbier ski pass costs £15 for six days (not including Mont-Fort). Hire of standard skis for six days £50, boots £31. Two hours' ski school instruction over five days £35.

The Ski Club of Great Britain (0171-245 1039).

Safety on the piste

THE combined effects of public holidays around Europe and a major snowfall make the coming week the most crowded on the Alps. It is a case of the survival of the safest, so follow these guidelines taken from the International Ski Federation rules for the conduct of skiers.

1. Respect for others: a skier must behave in such a way that others are not endangered or prejudiced.
2. Control of speed and skiing: a skier must adapt his speed and manner of skiing to his personal ability and to the conditions of terrain, snow and weather, and the density of traffic.
3. Choice of route: a skier coming from behind must choose a route in such a way that he does not endanger skiers ahead.
4. Overtaking: a skier may overtake another skier above or below and to the right or the left, provided that he leaves enough space for the overtaken skier to make any voluntary or involuntary movement.
5. Entering and starting: a skier entering a marked run or starting again after stopping must ensure that the run is clear of others.
6. Stopping on the piste: a skier must avoid stopping on the piste in narrow places or where visibility is restricted. After a fall in such a place, a skier must move clear of the piste as soon as possible.
7. Climbing and descending on foot: a skier on foot must keep to the side of the piste.
8. Respect for signs and markings: a skier must respect all of these.
9. Assistance at accidents: every skier is bound to assist.
10. Identification: every skier and witness must exchange names and addresses after an accident.

• The Ski Club of Great Britain (0171-245 1039) has a safety sheet explaining the FIS rules in detail.

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14 Apr	£659	01, 10, 15 Jun	£619

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TRAVEL

NORWAY: The Victorians dangled the bait — now the Namsen river is a magnet for anglers worldwide

Where the river runs wild

We were in central Norway, about 100 miles north of Trondheim, once Norway's capital and where Viking Olav Tryggvason governed the Norwegian empire in 997. Trondheim is a beautiful city. It is a port of call for the world's cruise ships before they venture farther north in search of the midnight sun. Shore excursions take passengers to view the 11th-century Nidaros Cathedral where the kings of Norway are crowned.

A South African couple from the *Canberra* were overcome by the beauty of the fjords. Later, though, we met an Australian coach party who vowed never to return, for they had not seen the sun at midday let alone mid-night.

Just outside the small town of Grong is one of the most thrilling sights any salmon angler could wish to see. The mighty Namsen river, famous for yielding monstrous salmon of 40, 50 and even 60lb, turns gracefully on its meander 100 yards wide and rushes into a tantalising tail before turning white and bubbly to form the neck of another pool. It contin-

ued swirling and chattering in a language only a salmon angler understands.

"I scarcely dare describe the feelings with which I approached Spillum, the first stage from Bangsund, and where I knew I should obtain the first view of the Namsen," wrote the Rev William Belton in *Two Summers in Norway*, published in 1840.

The very first glance satisfied me. I had at last reached the real river for an angler: a deep, broad stream rolled majestically into a beautiful bay, that in turn opened into a noble fjord."

The jewel in this Namsen crown is the cottage of Per Olav Moun, owner and boathouse of its superb beat of

water. Moun's farmhouse was built by his great-grandfather in 1891. It only exists because an Englishman called Frank Dugdale, who had been renting the fishing, decided, as Victorian sportsmen did, that he must have a home overlooking the river.

The house has changed little since it was built. As you enter the musty atmosphere, there is a feeling of welcome, as though at any moment gentlemen in Harris tweeds and plus fours will greet you with a whisky and soda. The rooms, with their exposed floorboards and pine paneling, echo to your footsteps. The walls carry wooden carvings of 50lb salmon, and all around are the memories: photographs main-

ly, but as you keep walking you feel more and more that you have stepped back in time. The master bedroom still has its iron and brass beds and a Victorian wash-stand. Next door is the bathroom with its original roll-top bath in which many a fisherman will have soaked away the aches and pains of wrestling Namsen salmon to the shore.

Only the kitchen has been modernised, but not too much. The fridge, still working perfectly, dates from the 1950s. In the tackle room there is the greatest discovery of all. Fishing rods sent here not long after the turn of the century lie in their packing crates, marked "Newcastle to Bergen". In another box, fly cases

and wallets stuffed with Durham Rangers, Mar Lodges and Silver Doctors. And in a trunk lie Hardy reels, some still carrying their silk lines. So heavy were they that you needed two hands to pick them up to reveal the owner's name: "Bainbridge, Espley Hall Morpeth."

George Bainbridge was a businessman who founded a department store in Newcastle. He fished the Namsen for more than 25 years, ending in the 1930s, and his son continued in his footsteps until 1950. Well into his eighties, Mr Bainbridge still travelled to Grong to fish his beloved river. Hardly able to walk, he brought two nurses to take care of him. Each day he was carried into the boat but, at the age of 87, he caught a 57lb

salmon. Today fishermen from all over the world travel here to do battle with the great fish. For £500 a day you too could take this bear, with the services of Per Olav as a boatman, and stay in the old house. Christian Cheffetville, a Frenchman living in Budapest, has been making the trip for the past 17 years. His dream to catch a big salmon on a fly hasn't materialised. "I hope I'm getting closer and I think I will come back here until I get the big one."

Myfi Heim, on the other hand, a petite English lady from London, has taken only four years to land her fish of a lifetime. It weighed, 44lb and took nearly two hours to gaff. "I like to stalk it. I like to hook it, kill it and have it on the table — that's why I fish."

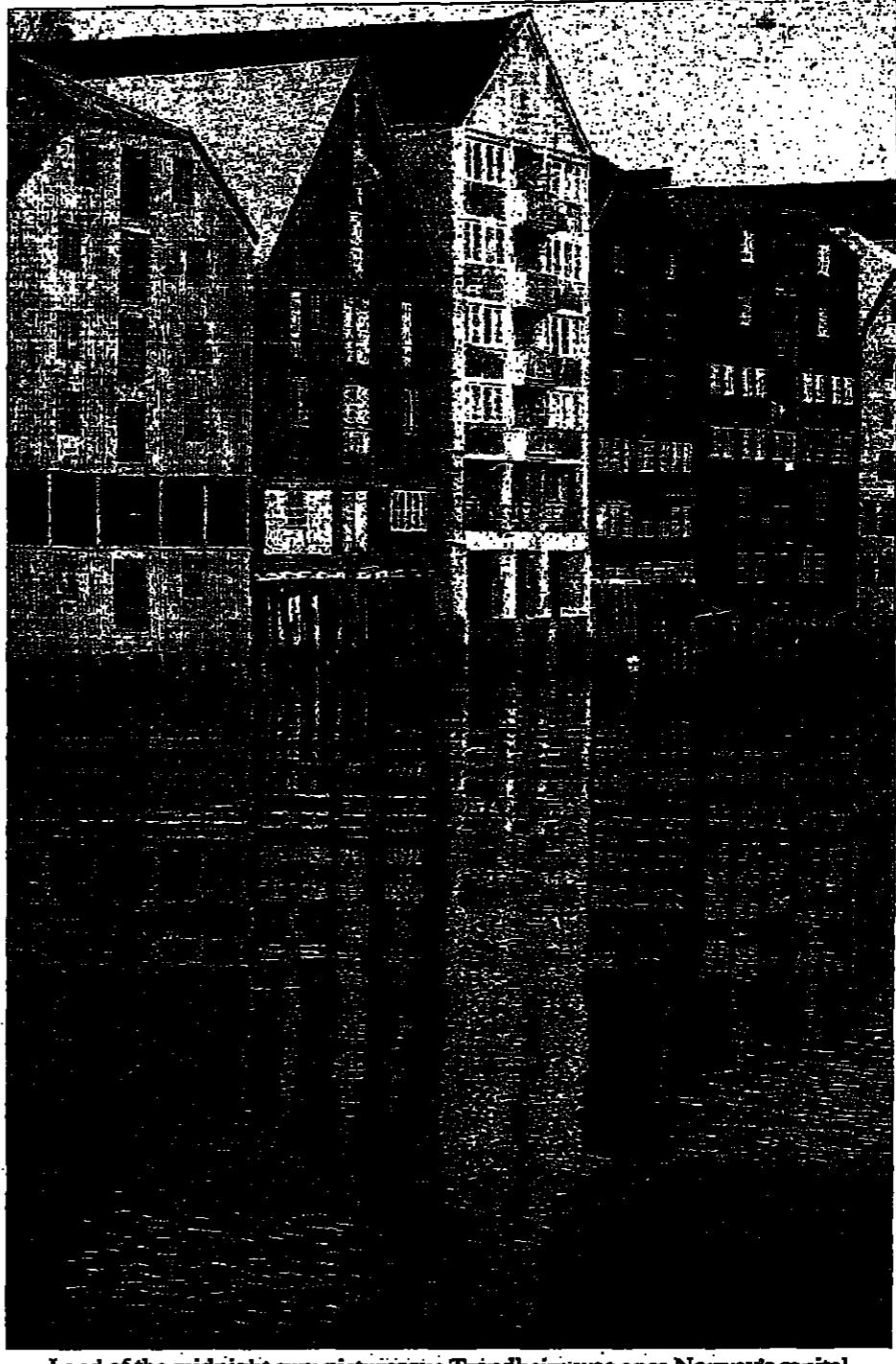
And then there was Richard Flasch from Vienna, member of the International Game Fish Association, who holds many world records and is a wonderfully funny man, is terrified of his French friend's driving. "Alain Prost in disguise," said Richard. We thought the same as he drove us at breakneck speed to sample the delights of another much smaller salmon river, the Argard. That was when we lost Richard. He went to try out one of the 14 rods he'd brought with him and disappeared for two hours.

As we set up our own 15ft Viking fly rod, made by Bruce and Walker, Richard pounced on it to admire its construction. You felt he would be happy to add it to his collection.

Americans were also in town, in the shape of John Armstrong from Connecticut. He was not a happy man. After a week's fishing his score was zero. His trip had cost him well over \$4,000 (£2,700) and he was beginning to wonder if there were any fish in the river at all, although his friend had managed a 51-pounder on a Red Bomber bought in the local tackle shop. "It's time to ask questions in Oslo," said John. "There seems to be an ambivalence on the part of the authorities, who are more related to ocean fishing and netting than the sports fisherman." John would be writing to the Norwegian Fisheries Minister.

Norway is expensive and is not noted for its food. Howev-

er, during our two-night stay at the Royal Garden Hotel in Trondheim we ate



Land of the midnight sun: picturesque Trondheim was once Norway's capital

Fact file

□ The author was a guest of Brathens, which flies from Newcastle and Gatwick to Bergen, Oslo and Stavanger with a connecting flight to Trondheim. Cost from £232 from Newcastle, £244 from Gatwick. For details: 0191-214 0991.

□ Angling holidays arranged by NORSC Holidays (01277 560033).

□ The Moun Farmhouse (0047 7433 2122).

□ Hotels Royal Garden Hotel, Trondheim — (00 47 7352 1100). Verthuset Hotel, Grong, will also arrange fishing trips on the Namsen. Cost about £300 per day for full board and lodgings including fishing and the use of a guide — (00 47 7433 1300).

□ Time to go: June to August. The midnight sun is visible from 12 May to 1 August.



KEITH ALLAN

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TRAVEL

BURMA: Peter Hughes, in reflective mood, cruises down the Irrawaddy and discovers a new Nile

On the new boat from Mandalay

Should ships, like sheep, ever be declared "sentient beings" spare a thought for the feelings of the M.S. Nederland. She is in shock. Two years ago she was an unsuspecting hotel ship, berthed at Dresden on the River Elbe in Germany and settled into semi-retirement after 30 years' service as a cruiser on the Rhine. Today she is in the Far East, sailing in what promises to be the year's most spectacular and controversial holiday production.

Plucked from Europe and anonymity, and transported halfway round the world on the marine equivalent of a low-loader, she has a new name and a new career. The Nederland is now the *Road to Mandalay*, registered in Yangon and flying the flag of Myanmar, as she operates champagne-style cruises on the River Ayeyarwady in one of the ten poorest nations on earth.

It is not just the ship which has undergone a change of identity. The river is still better known by its previous name, the Irrawaddy; Yangon was Rangoon and Myanmar is what we are now expected to call Burma. Visit Myanmar Year — which this is — would be all the more persuasive if people knew where it is.

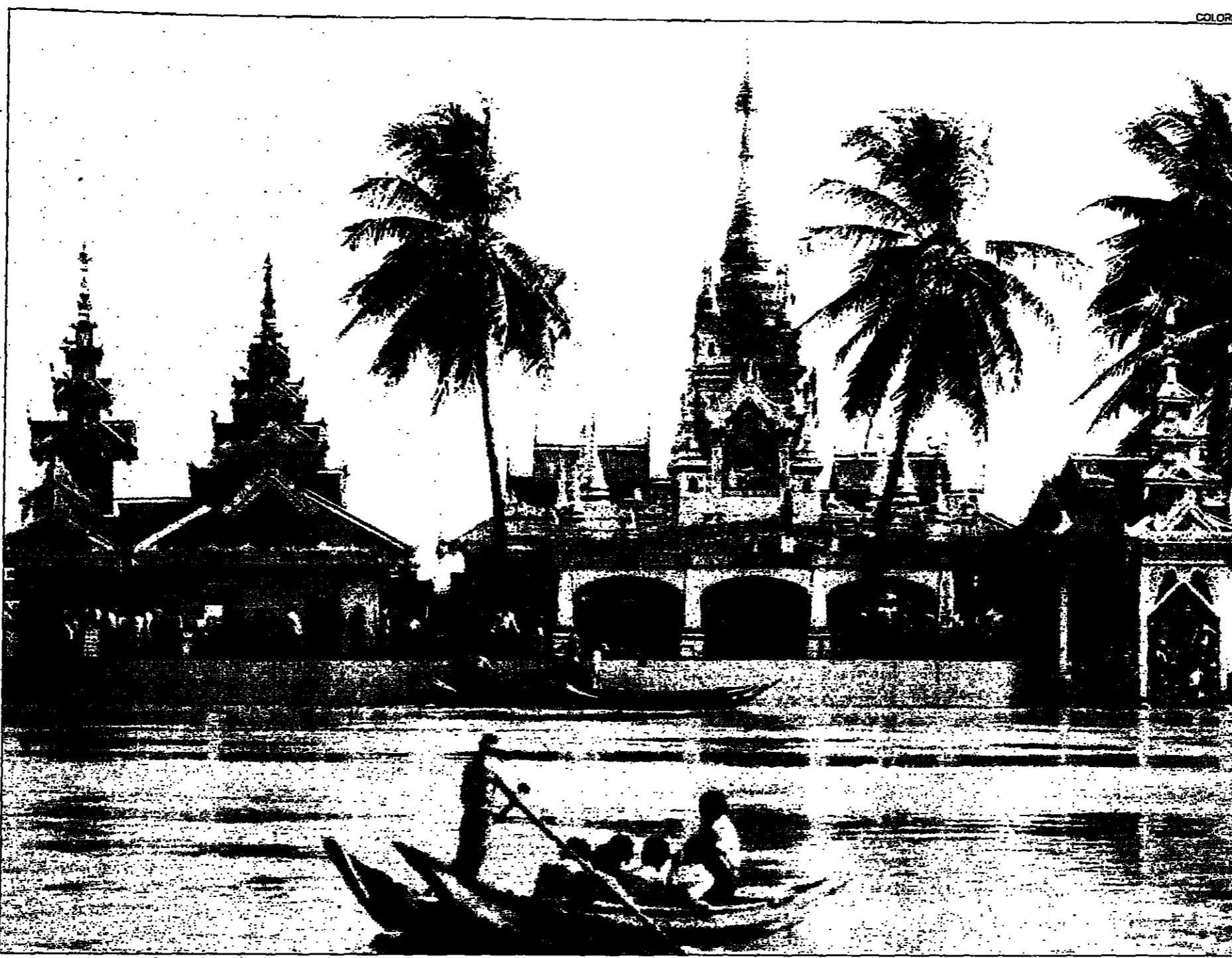
James B. Sherwood knows. He is the buccaneer American businessman who brought us the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express and is responsible for the Nederland's makeover. To help the rest of us to find our way to Burma, he has posted young men in maroon longyi (sarong) with "Road to Mandalay" placards all the way from Thailand to the gangplank of the ship. They are in Bangkok airport at the Myanmar Airways check-in, in Rangoon to shepherd passengers through immigration to their Air Mandalay connection, and in Mandalay to steer them to where the ship is moored.

This month, Mr Sherwood was at the top of the gangplank to greet his guests for the inaugural cruise. They might have been cast from an Edwardian novel: a prince and two princesses from the Endsleigh League of European royalty, our own much-travelled Princess Michael of Kent among them; a duke; a marches and marchioness; a film star, Helena Bonham Carter; and assorted lords and ladies, whose names tended to be the same as their addresses. When someone referred to a lady friend it could have been a title or a position.

Those without titles merely had money. A woman returning to a sightseeing bus with a parcel of lacquerware explained to her husband where it might go: "This is not for Monaco or Barbados or London but it could be perfect for Hong Kong or Majorca."

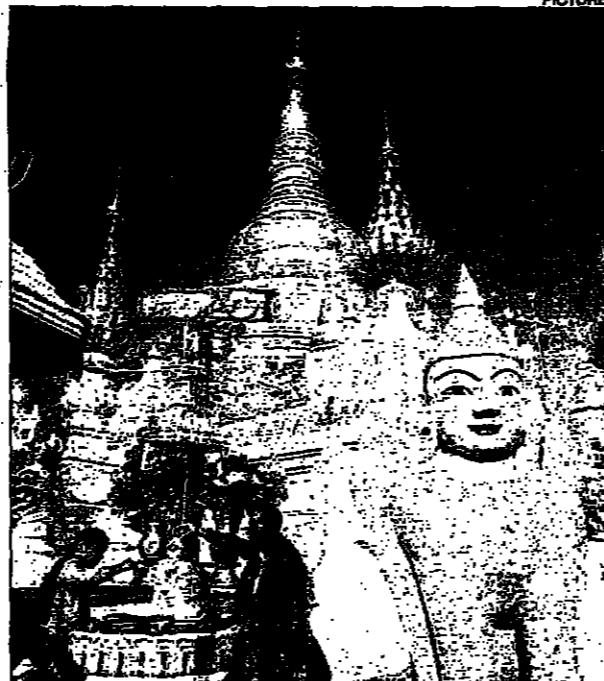
Their first experience of the river was not on the *Road to Mandalay* but aboard a tubby local passenger ferry chartered by Orient-Express to make the hour-and-a-half journey upstream to Mingun. Under the shelter of a green tin roof, wicker chairs had been arranged in outward facing lines on the upper deck from which to inspect the passing country. It was like travelling in a cricket pavilion.

Mingun would have had the largest Buddhist pagoda in the world had the Burmese equivalent to Mad King Ludwig managed to complete it. Instead, it possesses one of the largest piles of bricks in the world, which you can climb with a local child taking your hand. At the bottom the com-



A humble wooden boat ferries locals across the Irrawaddy against the backdrop of an ancient pagoda — a scene that greets passengers luxuriating aboard the *Road to Mandalay*.

PICTURES



Awaiting tourists: Rangoon's gilded Shwedagon pagoda

panionship is expected to be repaid with a soft drink, though the 11-year-old boy who befriended me appeared to expect a can of lager.

Only in the past few years have the doors to Burma been more than ajar. Visas now run for four weeks instead of seven days, and the country is promoting itself. Yet even at Rangoon's great gilded Shwedagon pagoda the visitors are nearly all Burmese.

This is that rare moment in a developing tourist country when the Western visitor can still feel he or she has the country to themselves. It will not last: new hotels are going up faster than monks' umbrellas: Air Mandalay is a new, Singapore-based domestic airline. However fanciful, Visit Myanmar Year has a target of half a million visitors.

The country is governed by a military dictatorship, a remnant of a ruthless and capricious regime whose tyrannies were catalogued by both the United Nations and Amnesty International. Optimists look at the amount of investment going into Burma as evidence of improvement.

Mr Sherwood, who has so far spent \$14 million (about £9 million) in setting up the *Road to Mandalay*, was invited by the Government to start the cruises. He is guaranteed no competition at the five-star end of the market for five years.

Naturally he takes a charitable, if not Nelsonian, view of the regime: "My problem is I don't know what the human rights abuses are. I haven't been able to discover them."

The generals who run the Government he describes as

"young, very able people who seem to be totally dedicated to improving the country. Since taking over in 1989 they have maintained 8 per cent growth per annum. That is very impressive".

At 333ft, the *Road to Mandalay* is the largest vessel the Irrawaddy has ever seen. At this time of year, before the Himalayan snows melt and the river rises nearly 40ft, these are tricky waters. They may be a quarter of a mile wide, but there is only the narrowest trench deep enough for the ship's draught. She moves, therefore, imperturbably in a series of serene zigzags like a courtly pinball following a course marked more clearly in the Burmese captain's memory than by the occasional bamboo stick. Even then the channel may have shifted when she returns upstream in a week's time. In the tightest reaches a boat is sent ashore to take soundings.

On either side the flood plain stretched flat and torpid, one moment a sort of tropical Broad with flashes of green paddy and stands of trees, the next a semi-desert where the river lapped broad sand beaches. A stillness settled on

the scene like haze, the only movement being the occasional slow progress of bicycles and bullock carts along the banks.

The activity was all on the water. Boats big as artis transported passengers on their upper decks, cargo below: barges loaded with reals placed men at their bows to take continuous soundings with long poles: fishing skiffs with gondola bows were skinned by men standing in the stern, oars crossed like knitting needles. At the villages, women at the water's edge battered clean their laundry with wooden paddles before laying it to dry in rows as orderly as medal ribbons.

On the ship, a vice-count, his arm unexpectedly tattooed, was in the swimming pool while Princess Michael, wearing lemons, performed ostentatious caderazos on a laptop computer. They were on the upper observation deck, whose teak planks run almost the length of the vessel between a bar in the stern and the wheelhouse.

By day, the deck is a smart yacht-club veranda; by night, when the air is cool and the lights are soft, it's one of the best bars in Asia.

Below, in the air-conditioning, there is a piano bar and an observation lounge which becomes an auditorium when local entertainers come aboard: a folk show one night, puppeteers another. In the cabins there is monogrammed

bed linen, Penhaligon toiletries and television. If the observation areas live up to their style, the dining room hardly does credit to the food. It looks more like an Indian restaurant from a provincial high street than a place serving fashionable West End fare. Like every other ship on the Irrawaddy, we eventually ran aground. With a soft hiss of sand beneath the keel and a gentle lurch just enough to send the water from the swimming pool sloshing over aristocratic ankles, we came to rest on a sandbank. The ship can pump water from her ballast tanks to raise herself four inches; on this occasion her power was enough to wrench herself free.

About 120 miles downstream, the cruise ended at one of the world's great archaeological sites. At Pagan (now known as Bagan) between the 11th and 13th centuries the kings of Burma indulged in a fury of temple building until the rampaging armies of Kublai Khan brought the empire to an end. More than 2,000 stupas erupt out of a dusty scrub plain, some crumbling, others restored; most no more than sacred pinnacles, a few the size of cathedrals.

It was in this Lost World landscape, so intense and strange, that I recalled where I had experienced similar feelings — in Egypt, and there was a boat to return to at the end of those days, too. The *Road to Mandalay* has navigated a new Nile.

CRUISING TRAVEL TIPS

Take a ten-day cruise (15-day fly-cruise) along the Amazon with Silverstar (0171-929 1929) departing November 25. Starting in Barbados, the cruise takes in Devil's Island, Breves Narrows, Santarem and Manaus in Brazil, and costs £3,745 per person, sharing a double cabin. The price includes return flights from London, Manchester or Glasgow, transfers and port charges. There is a 15 per cent reduction for early payment.

Magic of the Orient (01293 537700) offers three-night cruises from Thailand aboard a 17-metre wooden junk. Taking in Phang Nga Bay, Sea Gipsy village, Krabi and the Phi Phi islands, the trip costs £348 per person, based on two sharing. Departs most Saturdays and Tuesdays from Phuket. Flights not included.

Six-day cruises along the Baltic coast with Moswin Tours (0116-271 9922) cost from £815 per person and include return flights from Heathrow to Hamburg, rail transfers and five nights' full board. Departs June 2, July 28, and August 7.

Cruise alongside whales in the Southern Ocean between New Zealand and Tonga. The 13-day voyage with Explore Worldwide (01252 319448) costs £1,965 per person, including flights from London and a five-night hotel stay.

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WEEKEND SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

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TRAVEL

GULF OF SALERNO: In a village near the sea, Christena Appleyard discovers the elusive real Italy



The tranquil gardens and pool at the Palazzo Belmonte, once a royal hunting lodge

There is a dream of Italy that is not the clogged tourist crowds of Venice, Florence or Rome. Nor is it the pricey, rural idyll of Tuscany or the packed, burning beaches of Viareggio. Rather it is the authentic, ancient grandeur of a way of life rooted in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

In this dream old palazzos in dense woodland slumber away the centuries. Courtyards are divided into blinding sunlight and deep shadow. Inside are the accumulations of the ages — worn stone staircases, darkened wood, curious paintings that just might be lost masterpieces. Outside, gardeners tend the grounds in the intense heat. Meanwhile, lunch slides into the lengthy siesta which then, effortlessly, becomes dinner. Beyond the walls the life of an old village continues — old men sitting around the fountain, teenagers strutting and an out-of-tune church bell clanging.

This is the dream of the real Italy — secretive, remote and replete with mysterious customs and traditions. Like every other such dream — the perfect English village, the

The palazzo of princely dreams

authentic American West, the cute pastoral story of old Provence — it is under threat. The modern world intervenes. Tourists discover these places and turn them into parades of their past. Once known they can never be unknown again and the dream is over.

The trick is not to keep the modern world out but to control it. And that is what Angelo, the Prince Belmonte, is trying to do. The Palazzo Belmonte is 120km south of Naples. Finding it in a hire car from Naples airport is a testing but thrilling experience. One minute you are duelling with the battered Alfas and Fiats, struggling to find your way south, the next you are curving around the huge cliffs that plunge into Salerno. And then you leave the motorway and find yourself in a new, empty landscape dotted with small towns — Battipaglia, Agropoli and, finally, Santa Maria di Castellabate, the home of the Prince Belmonte.

Dipping down towards the sea you pass the long wall of his 17th-century palazzo; turn dangerously through its slightly too narrow gateway and there you are — the dense trees, the ancient walls, the gardeners, the lot. And later you discover that a few yards from the gate is the perfect village — old men, teenagers, life drifting by as it has done for centuries. This is Italy.

The prince, a tall, amiable, handsome figure straight out of an Italian 1950s movie, has turned his palazzo into a restrained resort. He has wisely tried to change as little as possible. Once it was a

hunting lodge visited by the kings of Spain and Italy. Now it is a collection of self-catering apartments visited, overwhelmingly, by the British.

Angelo, the present Prince Belmonte, has kept his own quarters but divided the rest of the building and the neighbouring "Edoardo's House" into 21 separate units that can take from two to eight guests.

The conversion is understated.

There are no sudden introductions of plastic or the wrong

wood to the architecture:

drive you out of the immediate area. You can do this either by hire car or on private excursions arranged by the palazzo.

The first thing is to drive up the mountain behind the village. Beware the road, a long run of sharp hairpins. At the top is another village known simply as Castellabate. This is stunning: a cluster of buildings clinging precariously to the mountain top and with views over miles of coastline.

Other trips take more planning. Paestum to the north is essential — a staggering glorious collection of Greek temples and a wonderful museum. Then, of course, there are Pompeii and Herculaneum, the two Roman towns buried and preserved by an eruption of Vesuvius. And you can go up the volcano itself — a drive followed by a tough, steep walk but worth it. These all involve the two-hour drive back to Naples, so you need to commit a whole day for any or all of them.

Finally, there is the whole Amalfi peninsula. This is familiar holiday territory. The towns of Amalfi, Positano and Sorrento and the island of Capri are more or less fixtures on the "Romantic Italy" map. For me they are too much, too touristy, too — after Santa Maria — obvious. But they are there and all within reach.

The point is that the Palazzo Belmonte is what you make it — the Italian dream or a peaceful base from which to explore the strange and extraordinary wonders of the whole of Naples and southwards.

The prince is performing a fine balancing act with his resort. It can no longer survive as a royal hunting lodge; tourism is now the economic game. He has decided to let in the tourists, but with immense care and a certain gentle authority. He complains good naturedly about any Lilo in the pool, just enough to preserve peace and decorum. And he has resisted any temptation to "do up" the place, which would destroy its strong feeling of continuity with the past.

Self-catering is the idea and with the shops in Santa Maria this is simple. The palazzo does lay on meals. Dinner is worth it for the sleepy pleasure of watching the sun go down from the outside restaurant and the prince dining with his curious range of exotic guests. The food is OK and filling but not great.

All this should be enough to put you into a fairly deep trance for at least a few days. At some point, however, conscience or curiosity should

be a thousand other ancient places could copy. But they don't. They get discovered and slowly become just another stop-over on the holiday map.

Check out the Palazzo Belmonte. There are few such places left.



Palazzo Belmonte fact file

The author was a guest of C.V. Travel, 43 Cadogan Street, London SW3 2PR (0171-581 0851). One week in an apartment for four people at Palazzo Belmonte in May, June or September costs £530 per person, and from £625 pp in July/August. Including return flights to Naples with British Airways and transfers but not including meals. Larger or smaller apartments are also available. Special off-season rates (May and October) four nights for the price of three, including car hire.

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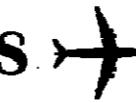
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GAMES

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by Raymond Keene

WORLD champion Garry Kasparov suffered a sensational reverse in the first game of his six-game match against IBM's Deep Blue computer in Philadelphia this month.

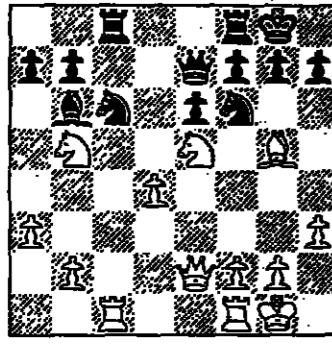
Kasparov had lost to computers before, but only in rapid-play games. He had, in any case, always gained his revenge. Kasparov's loss to Deep Blue was the first time that a world champion had lost to a computer at the normal tournament rate of 40 moves in two hours.

From the start in game one, Kasparov seemed ill at ease. His second move blew the position wide open, when conventional wisdom dictates that a closed strategy is the prudent course against computers. Kasparov's tenth move, Bb4, looked artificial, and after this bishop was driven out of play on the queen's flank, the computer systematically set about inflicting weaknesses on Kasparov's pawns.

With his position collapsing on all fronts, Kasparov launched a desperate counterattack, and towards the end of the game was even threatening checkmate in one move. Nevertheless, the computer brushed aside Kasparov's last vestiges of counterplay with contemptuous ease.

We join the first game just before Deep Blue, playing white, shatters Kasparov's kingside pawn structure.

**W: Deep Blue
B: Garry Kasparov
Philadelphia
February 1996
Game 1**



Kasparov has now achieved his primary strategic goal, having broken into Black's king's fortress, exposed the black king and created a passed h-pawn. The presence of opposite bishops in fact increases White's chances of attack, since the black bishop cannot sensibly re-enter the game. Kasparov ultimately won both of Black's doubled f-pawns and forced resignation by the computer on move 72.

IBM's Deep Blue is a formidable calculating monster which harnesses 256 processors in parallel and thus sees 512 million different positions every second. The question must be whether such immense calculating power can translate into the strategic and tactical creativity required for victory on the chessboard.

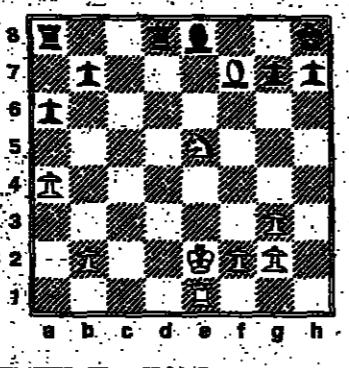
By Raymond Keene

Last week's winners: P. Saiter, West Mersea; Esec A. Kelly, Jedburgh, West Yorkshire; R.M. Hill, Morpeth, Northumberland.

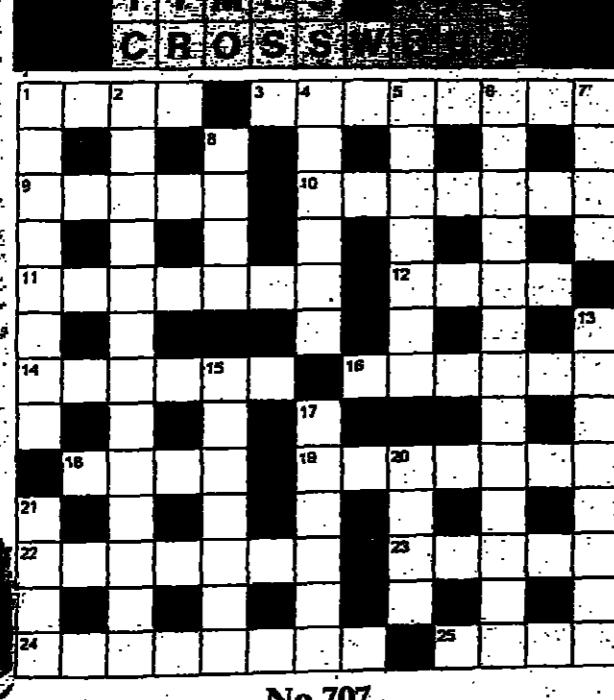
White to play.

Send your answers on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine publication. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 ... Qg3.



CROSSWORD



No 707

ACROSS
1 Scraps of cloth (4)
3 Abandoned (8)
9 White mark on face; burn (5)
10 Pay reluctantly (4,3)
11 Fund of money; excellent (7)
12 Implement (4)
14 Indigenous person (6)
16 Breathe noisily; scheme (6)
18 Unaccompanied man; share speculator (4)
19 Splendid array (orig. armour) (7)
20 Originate, proceed from (7)
23 Coating for pastries, pottery (5)
24 Show reluctance (8)

DOWN
1 Sea animal; fasten tightly (4)
2 Rudy (coloured) (8)
2 Make desperate, inadequate (5,2,6)
4 (Facts) recorded and stored (2,4)
5 Slight wound; withdraw (7)
6 Not be pushy (4,4,5)
7 Western military alliance (1,1,1)
8 Touched; material (4)
13 Fighting fit; if I must (4,4)
15 Homeless person (7)
17 Positive, optimistic (6)
20 Close by (4)
21 Hebrew B; a Little Woman (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 706
CROSS: 1 Badminton 5 Warm 8 Albanian 9 Smug 11 Heron
2 Grown up 13 Coblet 15 Douché 18 En masse 19 Boje
3 Plan 22 No-go area 23 Lure 24 Inherent 25 Cuckoo
4 OWN: 1 Bear-hug 2 Debar 3 Non-nonsense 4 Grange
5 Almanac 7 Mug up 10 Go for broke 14 Bombsai 16 Elegant
6 Heron 18 Excel 20 Gorge
7 Oliver 21 Hail 22 Dismay 24 Dismay 25 Cuckoo

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READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right). The cartoon, from the Punch library, includes the contemporary caption.

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Cartoon caption (96), Weekend Games Page, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, February 21.

**W: Deep Blue
B: Deep Blue
Game 2**

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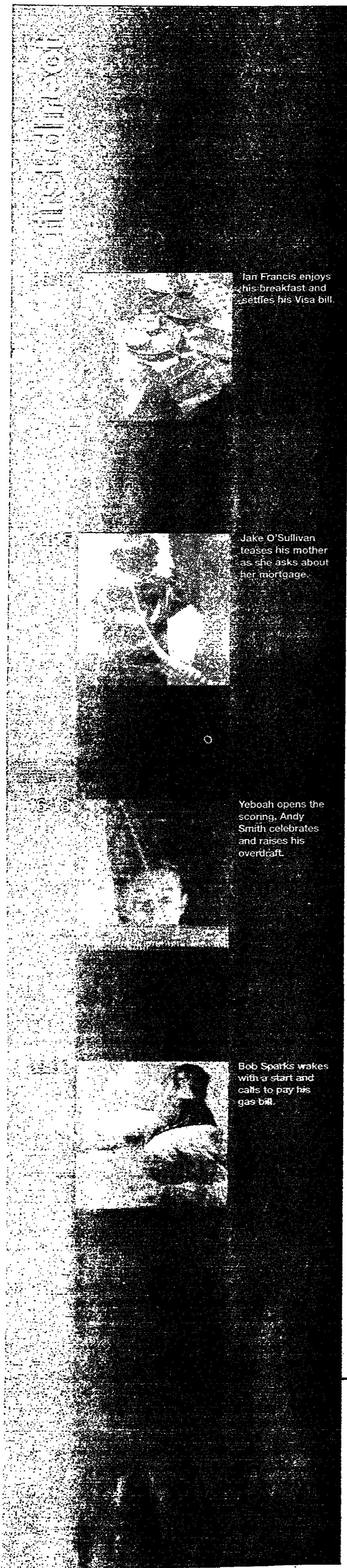
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*Survey undertaken by NOP Market Research among 1,000 randomly selected current account customers. Interviews were conducted by telephone between 31 October 1994 and 16 November 1994. Enquirers must be aged 18 or over. In order to safeguard our customers, certain transactions may require written confirmation. First Direct reserves the right to decline to open an account for you. Before agreeing to lend you money we will want to make sure you can afford the repayments. For written details of our services write to First Direct, Freepost HK16, Leeds, LS98 2RS. First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc, a member of SFA. AL/68 Member HSBC Group

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A secret blonde in the life of radio's 'villain'

Page 9



Classic Range Rover runs out of road

Page 10



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

How the car became a film star

Alan Cops
discovers the
joys of driving
the magical
Chitty Chitty
Bang Bang

It was a bit like discovering Father Christmas really exists: I pushed the gear selector gently forward, let out the clutch and nosed out onto the road ... at the wheel of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

If, as so many believe, the British have a love affair with the motor car then perhaps this is where it all begins. Films seen in childhood, in which the car is as much a character as the people, from the sentimentality of *Genevieve* and the *Yellow Rolls-Royce* to the macho exploits of James Bond or *Judge Dredd*. Chitty may be more than 30 years old and a lot of racer rivals have come and gone, but it obviously keeps its place in children's affection. The film is regularly on the list of the ten most pirated videos, an accolade many directors would die for.

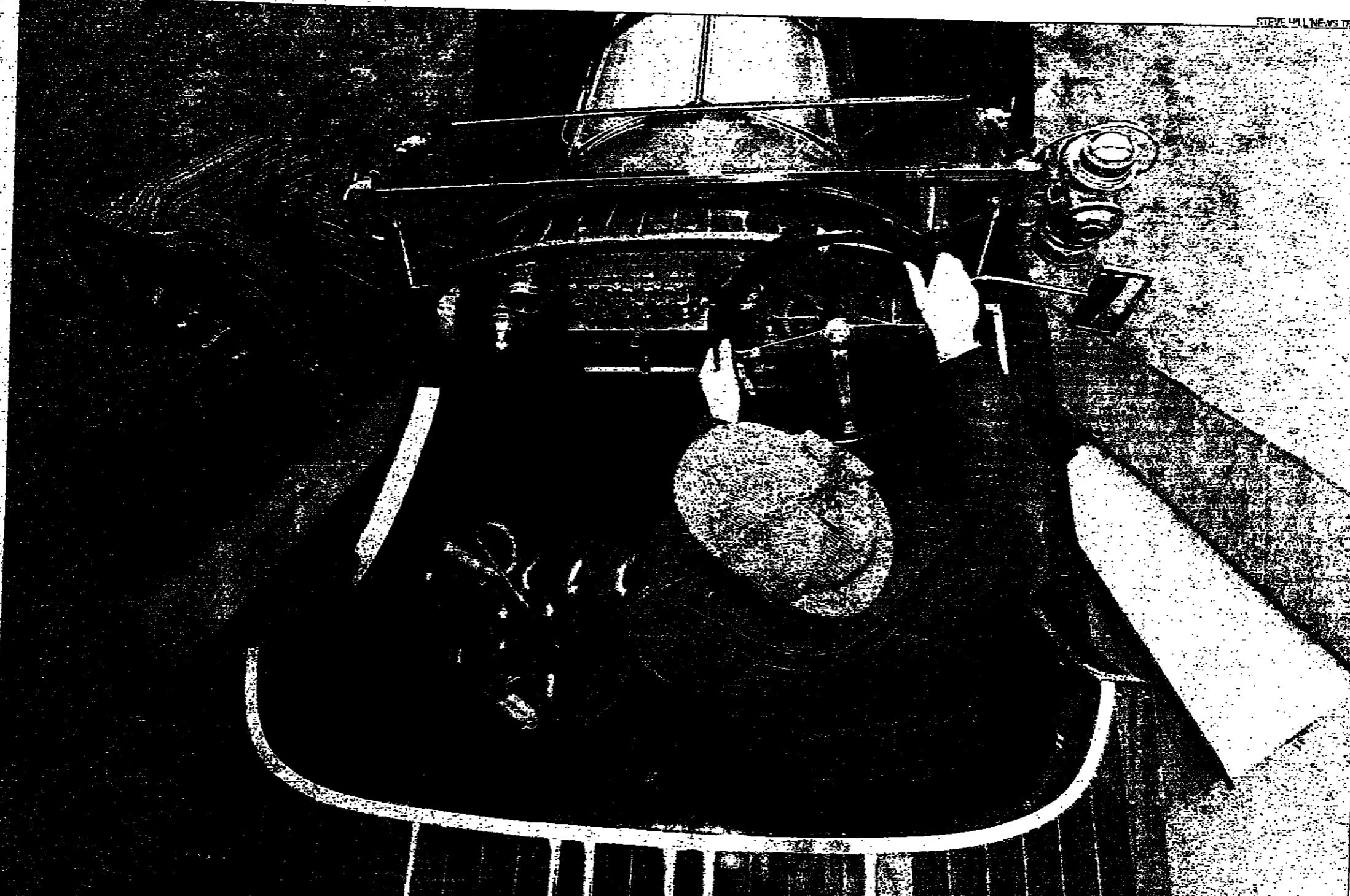
This year not only marks the centenary of the British motor industry but also the 100th anniversary of the cinema, and the two have been linked throughout their histories. The great joy of star cars is that almost all of them are real road-going vehicles — unlike starships, planes and even castles which are so often stage sets simply to be demolished as soon as their images are committed to celluloid.

This is a point made by Ken Adams, designer of this Chitty. I was driving, whose long film career has encompassed cars and many other props, and was capped last year by winning an Oscar for the set of *The Madness of King George*. "If you put a car in a film, it simply has to be real. It is so easy to spot a model. But Chitty was one I found extremely difficult, and so did Pinewood at that time."

"I liked the idea of a body like a boat and the bonnet of a Bugatti. I built a plywood mock-up, but it was a long time before I got it right. Ford supplied the chassis and the driving unit. The work was done by Alan Mann, the specialist who had prepared their GT40 race cars for Le Mans. We had a lot of fun on that picture. For the water sequences we had another car which we mounted on two powerboats and there was a full-scale model for the flying."

I found Chitty Chitty Bang Bang in Warwickshire — complete with boat tail, folding wings and lovingly polished snakeshead horn. I was guiding its 17-foot length past Anne Hathaway's cottage in Shottery just outside Stratford upon Avon. It's been on the job since the film was finished and bears the registration GEN 11, the nearest they could get at the time to Genie, to express the magic of it all.

Sitting beside me doing his best impression of Professor Potts was the owner of this fabulous beast, Pierre Picton,



With a chassis from a Ford van, boat tail from a Thames skip builder and folding wings — demonstrated to Alan Cops at the wheel by Pierre Picton — Chitty can't fly but has carried a lot of brides and grooms



circus clown, road safety campaigner, recent inventor of a revolving reflective traffic cone and author of *The Good Fish and Chip Guide*.

With a little gentle guidance, Chitty proved surprisingly easy to drive. An early Ford V6 engine takes up only a small portion of that bonnet that stretches into the distance but makes a wonderfully convincing noise — this car, after all, originally took its name from a Brooklands special of the most fearsome multi-lifted breed.

The Ford van chassis was extended at the front to mount the axle between two authentically cart-like leaf springs. It also uses a Borg-Warner semi-automatic gearbox of the type found in vans, which is a great asset because the absence of gears allows the driver to

concentrate on steering — and that needs some concentration, the technique resembling that of steering a boat.

The beautifully finished boat tail came from a Thames skip builder, the instruments and aluminium dash from an aircraft, headlamps and snake-

horn from some unidentified veteran and the burnished brass oil reservoir just in front of the outside handbrake from an early Rolls-Royce.

The car makes regular appearances at shows and is much in demand for weddings during the summer. Its most strikingly modern touch is the seatbelts, essential since most of its passengers tend to be on the young side.

But Chitty is not the only piece of auto-film history that

Pierre Picton has preserved. His other car is a Laurel and Hardy Model T Ford, the sort where the doors fall off and the back collapses at the touch of a hidden lever. It's a runner, but can't be registered for road use. It was bought from a Hollywood studio, one of several specially adapted for the two funny men and has been in Pierre's possession since becoming his chief prop during his time as a clown in Bertram Mills circus in the

1950s. (The first *Fish and Chip Guide* was compiled from tastings he made while the circus was on the road).

His cars are important links

in a chain of star cars which span the history of the cinema. One of the first films made by the British cinema pioneer Cecil Hepworth in 1900 was *Exploits of a Motor Car*, and another early British effort, *The Automobile Accident* made by Robert Paul, featured some of the first special effects.

resulting in a scene where a pedestrian's legs are gruesomely severed by a passing car. By 1906 special effects were sophisticated enough for Georges Méliès to show cinemagoers a car driving round one of the rings of Saturn in his film *The Motorist*.

Since then things have progressed to where carmakers fight for the opportunity to take a starring role in big budget movies. James Bond's transfer of allegiance to a BMW Z3 in *Goldfinger* is worth millions in publicity to the German maker. Aston Martin made the switch from small UK sports car maker to international name thanks to the same hero's use of a DBS. A car complete with all the *Goldfinger* gadgets is on permanent display at the Cornish Goldsmiths' showroom in Portreath.

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, of course, came from the pen of Bond's creator, Ian Fleming, a great motoring buff, who named it after the 18-litre Brooklands specials driven by Count Louis Zborowski in the 1920s. The only disappointment is that when you extend the wings it doesn't fly.

Which will you choose? New, or timeless?



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Thomas Sköld from Sweden speeds his Jaguar E-Type through the Alps. Blizzards, black ice, freezing fog and giant icicles were among the hazards faced by 161 drivers and for many the penalty points collected en route ran into thousands

If you thought our winter was bad . . .

Philip Young reports on the winners and gallant losers who endured the demanding Monte Carlo Challenge

Blizzards and driving snow, black ice, freezing fog, hail and skin-numbing rain . . . all of them hit competitors who set out for the sunshine of Monaco in the 7th Monte Carlo Challenge. Icicles by the metre hung off rock faces as drivers of classic and vintage cars snaked their way through Alpine passes.

And the weather took its toll. A total of 161 drivers set out with high hopes on the 1,500-mile journey from five venues — Bristol, Noordwijk in Holland, Stockholm, Oslo and St Moritz — but more than 50 arrived out of time. At the start in the warmth of Bristol's Swallow Royal Hotel, a simple average of 32mph seemed straightforward. But no driver managed to reach the most famous finishing ramp on rally history with a "clean sheet", and for some penalty points ran into thousands.

"It's been highly authentic and the best Monte so far," said Colin Francis, veteran navigator and top British finisher who guided Spanish driver Ignacio Sunzurdi to

second spot overall in a "fin tail" Mercedes 220. "But it has been mighty tough."

Some crews had no heaters, some in the pre-Second World War category were wrapped in flying jackets and scarves with no roofs, no windscreens and a few even had braking on the rear wheels only. "Downhill descents are more exciting than skiing," said David Brock-Jest, in the polished aluminium AC tourer of 1922, before engine problems forced him to a halt. The category was won by a well-driven Delahaye from Austria.

Another casualty was Sir David Steel, the former Liberal leader, whose Riley 15 suffered a broken differential just outside Monte Carlo. He and co-driver Andre Tammes made it to the finish line on the back of a truck, but that meant they did not qualify among the official finishers.

There were 19 nationalities in what has now become the most historic rally in Europe, with five countries in the top three cars. All the top three were German this year, with another Mercedes 220 —

driven by Norway's Monty Karian — winning outright, a reminder of the snowy Monte Carlo of 1960 when Mercedes romped home with a 1-2-3 clean sweep. In third spot was the former United States champion John Buffum, with ex-RAC Rally winner Neil Wilson on the maps in a little Porsche 356.

In winning the Ladies' Award, Alexandra Holt from Weymouth, Dorset, driving an MGA, maintained a unique record with her seventh straight Monte Carlo Challenge success; overall, she finished in 14th place.

But if old hands got their hands on the biggest cups, several novices also did well in the event. Nigel Cope in a Ford Anglia won the Novice Trophy, finishing 25th overall, just ahead of Chris Chalkley in a Riley 15.

"I was just a face in the crowd last year cheering them off, and I thought I could do this," he recalled. "So I found an old car, spent a day at the Rally School put on by the Classic Rally Association to bone up on the map work, and



With a little help from their friends. Sir David Steel and Andre Tammes needed a lift to the finishing line

here we are in Monte Carlo, only a dent in the front wing as a reminder of early mistakes," said Nigel.

Another novice entry, the 1962 MGA MkII driven by David Townsend and Dick Owens, who had spent 1,000 hours preparing it for its rally debut, finished 79th, a very creditable position for a car which had 100,000 miles on the clock. It was a suitable reward for the two men, who had spent more than 1,000 hours rebuilding it from the chassis up, running up a total bill of £6,500-plus in the process.

Hard Luck Trophy went to Ralph Stross in a big green Blower Bentley. Pre-war cars are meant to drive an easier route, with fewer mountains and more relaxed timing. Paperwork was his downfall. "I think I must be dyslexic," he explained to officials on the finish ramp, having driven the full route, heedless of the fact that, due to blizzards, many of the higher cols had been cut out at the last minute with changes of route just to help drivers like him.

His tale of woe — and the fact that he had driven the full week with no windscreen — meant that he was the runaway winner of the Peeling

into-the Wind Trophy when it came to thawing out in the riotous party at the Hotel De Paris.

E pitomising the amateur status of classic rallying, Stephen Wild and James Cook, two mechanical engineers from Wiltshire, came last, driving the smallest car in the event, an Austin A30. They had bought it for £100, totally rebuilt it themselves and completed the whole route loaded with spares, luggage on the roof rack and at a top speed of 55mph.

Even getting to the start proved a trial, with a three-hour delay on entry to East Germany, no road markings on the eastern autobahn and poor signposting which resulted in a wrong turning. Miller and his co-driver were promptly arrested on suspicion of spying by a police patrol and were only allowed on their way after paying a bribe of 200 Western cigarettes.

On that occasion, in some of the most severe weather encountered in the event's history, just 35 cars from 252 starters throughout Europe made the finish.

The rally, sponsored by Heritage Insurance, is organised by the Classic Rally Association, also organisers of the Peking-Paris Motor Challenge. Tel: 01253 831391.

Someone, somewhere is checking the database . . . it's time they bought a new car. Sue Baker explores the world of direct selling

Remember, they know where you live

Two features distinguished the unexpected doorstep caller. One was a broad, toothy smile, the other a discreet clipboard. Could I spare a few moments to be involved in some market research? "We're talking to car owners who drive recent registration models . . ."

She glanced meaningfully over her shoulder at the N-registration Ford in my driveway. It was a road-test car awaiting collection, but Ms Toothy Smile could not know that. Neither could she be blamed for this being the third interruption within a fortnight (the other two by phone) from market researchers eager to quiz me about my motoring habits and future car-buying intentions.

Finding out precisely what we drive, why, and when we will next want to upgrade to a newer model has become a sharp spearhead of carmakers' marketing activity. Doorstep and telephone callers seeking this information on their behalf are becoming a familiar phenomenon.

Every day, in newspapers and magazines, tempting competitions woo car owners to reveal the model they currently possess, and to volunteer not just the year but even the month when they anticipate changing it. Every time you buy a new household appliance, the questionnaire quizzes you to extract the same details.

An increasingly ferocious car marketing war is being waged to capture our attention, and hopefully our custom, next time around. Manufacturers, partly spurred by the erosion of private buyers in a largely stagnant new car market, are placing a growing reliance on direct marketing activity to stimulate sales.

Ford's marketing director, Tom Fullister, confirms that my recent flurry of encounters with car market researchers is by no means unusual: "What you are experiencing is entirely true. This kind of activity is increasing. We are seeing a lot of activity from our competi-

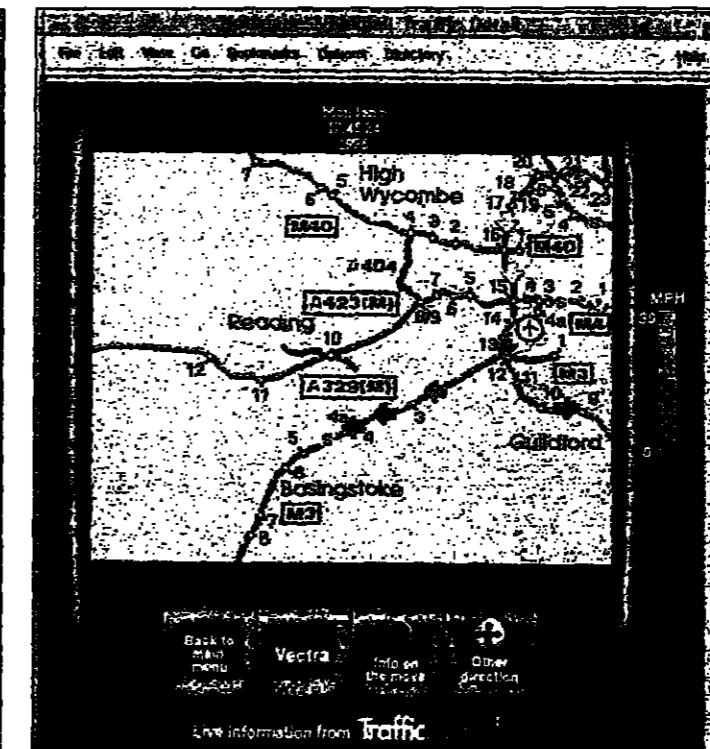


tors on direct mail, and we have asked for information about the cars, and lists bought in from firms that specialise in collating them. A recent example of the increasing sophistication with which carmakers now target potential customers was the research Ford carried out for the launch of the Galaxy. It surveyed 49,000 new car buyers to build up a detailed profile of who might buy the new model, so it would know who to approach.

Vauxhall also acknowledges the trend towards a much more direct approach to find more customers. Direct marketing manager, Paul Harrison, says his company's use of this type of activity has grown by 40 per cent over the past five years. "The most important thing is to give people the appropriate message at the correct time," he adds. "We try to identify when people are coming up to the replacement cycle, and contact them at the right point. Direct marketing pays off because it gets results."

Vauxhall has eagerly embraced new technologies to add muscle to its direct approach. When launching the Vectra, it sent out information to target customers on CD-Rom. It was the first car manufacturer in the UK to exploit the Internet; as well as setting up its own pages featuring the Vectra and Frontera, it has used sponsorship of the Trafficmaster page to target business drivers, who are then wooed across to browse the product pages. Anyone responding to the Internet pages becomes another target for direct marketing.

Any new model launch now



inevitably brings with it a fresh surge of direct marketing activity. When Citroën launches its new Saxo small hatchback in May, owners of similar models can expect their phones to start ringing. Marc Raven, Citroën's public affairs director, says that as part of the launch campaign, "we will tele-market, that is phone people we have reason to believe might be interested in it, and offer them information and a test drive. It's a very cost-effective way of reaching people, and it's growing."

At Rover, product communications director Denis Chick says his company's use of direct approaches to potential customers has changed rather than grown. "We are not actually doing it more than we have in the past, but we are now doing it a lot better."

"Like the rest of the industry, we used to shoot out a huge volume of junk mail. But there is no point in something which goes straight through the letterbox and into the dustbin. Over the past 18 months we have done a lot of work on targeting what we send to make it much more directly relevant to the person receiving it."

So that unexpected voice at the end of the line may be trying to sell you a Rover. Do people really welcome such calls, or do others, like me, find them an irritating intrusion in a working day?

"We tend to do most of our calls in the evening, when people are more likely to be at home and not working," says Chick. "And we find we get very positive responses. It wouldn't be worth doing unless it worked — and it does."

AD AWARDS

Renault wins with Papa and Nicole

LOVE THEM or hate them, Nicole and her Papa make a bigger impact on the motoring public than any other characters in car advertising, writes Alan Cops. The stars of that little soap opera which sells the Renault Clio helped the company to a second successive win in the "best advertising" category of awards made by Complete Car this week.

According to a poll of the magazine's readers nearly 40 per cent of women mentioned the television commercial favourably. But that verdict came hard on the heels of another survey that concluded that women detested almost all car ads because they were patronising. The respondents in that survey, carried out by Condé Nast, publishers of *Vogue* and *Tatler*, singled out the "insulting" Renault ad for criticism.

The Complete Car awards are voted by 470,000 readers of 12 sister titles throughout Europe. Renault was voted best advertiser in five countries. In Britain, VW was second followed by BMW, Ford, Volvo and Rover.

Daewoo, the Korean company which introduced its revolutionary direct-selling methods here only last year, was seventh. It was also voted the best value-for-money.

In Britain votes for the best car in nine categories were:

- Compact, VW Polo
- Small family, Peugeot 306
- Medium family, Audi A4
- Large family, BMW 5-Series
- Luxury, Jaguar XJ6/12
- Sports, Aston Martin DB7
- Convertible, Rover MGF
- Off-road, Range Rover
- MPV, Ford Galaxy

Peter Barnard: p2

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95 N B6 2.5 Auto Saloon, ABS, SE spec, boot spoiler, Amazon £10,995	96 N A6 2.5 TDI SE Auto, Air con, cruise, leather, £POA
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SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17 1996

CAR & TRUCK

Born in Scotland, the Glencoe and Glenalmond all-terrain vehicles travel very well. Alan Jabez reports



Making progress: Scot-Track's Marketing Manager, Michael Cullen, checks the Glencoe's grip on the Cairngorms, among the most inhospitable mountain terrain in Britain

Tracking the world market

Hands up those who can name a British vehicle manufacturer which only sold its first model in the late 1980s, but has subsequently won orders from around the globe. Customers have ranged from the emergency services in Britain, to a Texan-based oil company, Middle Eastern armed forces, an Indian theme park and relief workers operating in the mountains of Afghanistan.

This manufacturer is not based in the motor heartland of the English Midlands or the south of Essex, but close to lochs and rolling green hills in the far north of Scotland.

However, this may be the company's ideal location, as Scot-Track manufactures a range of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) which go much farther than any standard four-wheel drive.

I was invited to take the company's top-of-the-range model — the nine-seater (three in the cab and six in the back), eight-wheeled Glencoe — for a punishing ride close to the Cairngorms — among the most inhospitable mountain terrain in Britain. After loading the vehicle on to the back of a lorry, we drove to a huge, private estate where the land was so rough there was only a

narrow lane to get there and not a house or cottage in sight. To add a sense of drama, there was a biting wind in the air and freezing snow on the ground. But the Glencoe scampered up the rock-strewn hillside like a puppy playing in a garden.

Admittedly, we were only travelling a few miles an hour, but when you are ascending a hill so steep that many walkers would struggle to get up it, what matters is reaching the top, not the time it takes to get there. With its wide tracks, the Glencoe could climb a slope of 1:1, I was told — although that was not something I was willing to try.

Nonetheless, I doubt there is any terrain the aptly-named Glencoe will not traverse, including quicksand, peat bogs and deep ditches. It even has floats, so the vehicle can go straight into the water.

With hydraulic transmission and a hydrostatic steering system, the controls couldn't be easier. I had two levers between my knees which I pushed forward to go forward, and pulled back to reverse. To turn round, I simply held one lever steady, while pushing the other. Braking was nothing more complicated than keeping the levers together in neutral.

The Army has recently confirmed its first order for these vehicles, joining other high-

profile customers such as several fire brigades, the Northern Constabulary, which patrols the Highlands and Islands, the National Trust, Forestry Commission, British Telecom, electricity boards and the National Rivers Authority, as well as a number of estate managers.

Many customers request modifications before delivery so that the vehicles can undertake very specific tasks. So far, these have included accessories to enable them to sweep for mines in war zones of the Middle East, clear snow from roads in the North of Scotland and lift and carry heavy logs in several remote forests.

Farmers are also becoming interested. They are especially attracted by the option of the extra-soft "marshmallow" tyres (instead of tracks) which cause virtually negligible damage to the land.

The company's other models include a range of high-speed all-terrain go-karts and what is believed to be the world's only multi-purpose off-road wheelchair. Now fol-

owing the success of the Glencoe and the Glenalmond, Scot-Track is about to launch its latest model, the Hillcat. Priced at less than £10,000, this is primarily aimed at land owners with lesser needs and smaller resources. It does have a few new, novel features though, such as a removable rear door which makes it much easier to load large animals or other heavy objects on to the back seats. However, like the Glencoe and Glenalmond, it also has easy-to-remove tracks to increase its capabilities.

Scot-Track was founded in 1987 by Sandy Reid, who had been working as the distributor of a French ATV. But he felt that it had a number of design faults and approached the makers asking if he could make certain changes. They refused, so he set about designing his own vehicle. He found support from a British-educated Iranian engineer, Manochehr Salek, who was willing to move to the Moray Firth and equally keen to turn the Scottish vehicle concept into reality.

Demand is now so great that the company is already in discussion with an entrepreneur in Ecuador about an assembly arrangement which would give it a low-cost entry into the potentially huge South American market.

Rising to the occasion: the Glencoe has no difficulty tackling hills so steep that climbers would struggle

Engine: V-twin cylinder, overhead valve 25 bhp petrol. Transmission: Two-speed gearbox and heavy-duty torque converter. Performance: Max speed 20mph, but will climb a 25 degree slope with ease. Equipment: Comes with optional tracks and floats, tip-up back, crane or digger mounting. Disc brakes. Fuel tank capacity: 45 litres (approx five litres/hour). Price: £8,950 excluding VAT (tracks, £1,800 extra).

Completely cleared of all charges after a six-month sentence

Stuart Birch is converted to the attractions of diesel by Volkswagen's Golf GL TDI

The reality of it dawned gradually: six months' driving a diesel-engined car. Would I get time off for good behaviour? Would there be parole so I could drive a petrol car sometimes? And there was the prospect of all those jokes: "I didn't order a taxi," or, "I could have sworn I heard a truck..."

With all this in mind, it was with mixed feelings that I took delivery of a 1.9-litre Volkswagen Golf GL TDI (Turbocharged Direct Injection) for a six-month relationship. But it looked good in red with colour-coded bumpers, and the posh GT trim level included powered windows, mirrors and sunroof. There was a Sony radio/cassette.

The words bright, fashionable and elegant, did not come immediately to mind to describe the interior. However, the driving seat and steering column had height adjustment, so I could sit in the semi-reclining position I prefer. The instruments were superbly clear and all the stalks and buttons seemed to be in the right places.

So I set it to work, the 90bhp

engine injecting directly without a moment's pause, for this diesel leaves no time to do *The Times* crossword while waiting for glowplugs to heat. Now, after 6,000 miles of reliable Goldfiesing, I have to confess to at least a partial change of automotive religion: I am now a diesel believer.

The main reasons are three-fold. First, the fuel gauge needle's grudging downward movement; consumption has not averaged less than 50mpg and once reached 60mpg. Second, performance: it will move from 0-60mph in 11.5 seconds and has a top speed of 110mph. And, third, there is lots of engine torque, which means it pulls with vigour

from not much more than a tickover.

The 60mpg was down to my wife's fitness of touch on the accelerator pedal commuting to work from our rural home into the London suburbs. The worst figure so far has been a little under 50mpg, when the Golf was used almost exclusively on motorways.

Refuelling a diesel car used to mean arriving at the office or some social event smelling like a refinery, because diesel pumps get sticky and pongy. Now most garages provide disposable gloves.

The Golf's ride is generally good, but handling could be better. The TDI is far from TDiou to drive and sometimes has an identity crisis, now knowing whether it is a GTI or a stolid diesel. In fact, it is a bit of a *schnellwagen* and deserves rauter suspension and sharper responses. It is expected to get both soon, along with the option of the Audi A4.

General drivability is excellent, with muscular acceleration, even from very low engine speeds. This minimises gearchanges and is a big plus



The Golf GL TDI: after 6,000 miles, I have to confess to at least a partial change of religion: I am now a diesel believer

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF GL TDI

Engine: Four-cylinder direct injection turbocharged diesel, 90bhp, driving front wheels. Five-speed manual transmission. Performance: 0-60mph in 11.5 seconds, average 58mpg. Equipment: Driver's airbag and seat adjustment; central locking with security protection; powered sunroof, windows and door mirrors; rear head restraints. Price: £14,060.

NEWS IN BRIEF

A racing start for new McLaren

MCLAREN has sold all eight 1996 racing versions of its F1 Grand Tourer. The 1996 GTRs are updated versions of the car that won both the Le Mans 24-hour race and the Global GT Endurance championship in its debut season last year. Although new regulations restrict the 6-litre V12 BMW engine to 600bhp rather than 640bhp, other improvements make up for the power loss.

Korea opening

DAEWOO is to open its first showroom in Ulster in April. The Korean firm announced at the Ulster Motor Show which continues over this weekend. The one-acre site in Boucher Road, Belfast, will have touch-screen displays enabling customers to find out about its nine-car range.

Higher gear

THE RACY car magazine *Max Power* has overtaken the BBC's *Top Gear* as Britain's biggest-selling motoring monthly with a July-December circulation of 160,461.

Who's that blonde in the past of an American invader?

He is, according to the tabloids, the most hated man on radio. It's an exaggeration, of course, but Paul Gambaccini's arrival on Radio 3 has provoked howls of outrage, even on the floor of the House of Commons.

Gambaccini, once Radio 3's youngest disc jockey, presents the much-maligned *Morning Collection* on the corporation's most reactionary channel. The Great Gumbo, as he is known, co-author of the *Guinness Book of British Singles*, was accused of vandalism by Gerald Kaufman, pugnacious chairman of the Commons Heritage Select Committee.

Gambaccini, an accomplished classical pianist, has been accused of being egotistical, patronising and a latter-day Liberace. His accent has not helped. He devotes only four minutes of his show to his own voice; the other 52 are music. But it is four minutes too much for his army of detractors. Many Radio 3 aficionados hope — and pray — that the American's days are numbered, but the BBC is standing by its man. For now.

How did you first learn to drive?

I took the driver education course at Staples High School in Westport, Connecticut, in 1965. I had just turned 16. The 1966 yearbook included an advertisement for the summer school which had a posed photograph of me examining a car

**I remember Suki,
Paul Gambaccini
tells Andrew Pierce**

engine with a blonde named Suki Fontlieu. Frankly, I was more interested in examining Suki.

What was your first car?

I am prepared for a chorus of serious shooting on this one. It was a crimson Plymouth Sport Fury. My father bought it for me to drive to school, which was a mile away. Such is the American way of life.

What car do you drive now, and why?

A BMW 316i. It was chosen for me by a friend who knows eight million times more about cars than I. He knew it would be perfect for someone who wants a comfortable drive without having to worry about how the thing runs (you see, I was concentrating on Suki Fontlieu). My own contribution was to ensure that it was silver.

Do you like driving?

In London at nights and at weekends. Driving in the week is anti-social and counter-productive. My

stress level shoots up in traffic jams and I flatly refuse to drive on motorways. I lost my motorway virginity at 2.35am on my way back from a personal appearance. I was sleeping on the back seat when I was awakened by the impact on the front right corner. The object in collision then ricocheted off my back door. Our vehicle came to a halt. A lorry travelling in the opposite direction had shed a 6ft metal beam, which bounded across the central divider and headed straight towards us. It took no mathematical genius to know the combined speed of impact was in excess of 140mph. Never again.

What is your most hated car?

There is enough bad feeling in the world without starting to hate cars.

What is your dream car?

A Batmobile would be nice.

What is your worst habit in the car?

Causing fender benders. When second in a queue waiting to turn left in city traffic, I see the car in front starting to turn into the flow. I look right, then left, then look right again as I move forward. Wrong. Sometimes the lead car has had second thoughts and stopped in its tracks. It causes a fender bender every few years, as I have found to my cost.



Paul Gambaccini and his BMW 316i: "My contribution was to ensure that it was silver"

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

Behaving like the lead car in previous answer.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

When I was 18, I drove some friends from a college on the New Hampshire-Vermont border. We loaded up a full Plymouth Sport Fury (green this time) and drove to a girls' school, where each of the boys picked up a female companion for a trip into New York State where the drinking age was lower. Three people sat on the floor, four in the back seat, two in the front seat next to me, and two in the boot.

Have you ever had points on your licence?

I was caught speeding on my way from New Jersey to New Hampshire in the Bronx. A belligerent patrolman claimed I had been doing 60 in a 50mph limit. Maybe 57, but it was never 60. But I have always made it a policy not to argue with a man with a gun. So, after he shouted at me until he was hoarse, I pleaded guilty and paid the fine.

What do you listen to in the car?

Radio and compact discs. I have a choice of 32 radio stations in the BMW, too many even for an inverted button pusher like me.

If you were Secretary of State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do?

Nationalise the railways and give London Transport the millions of pounds it has been starved of in the last 15 years.

What is your favourite car advertisement?

This may cause curses from my friends in advertising, but I can't remember a single car commercial that is not running.

British brainwave that could put motorists miles ahead

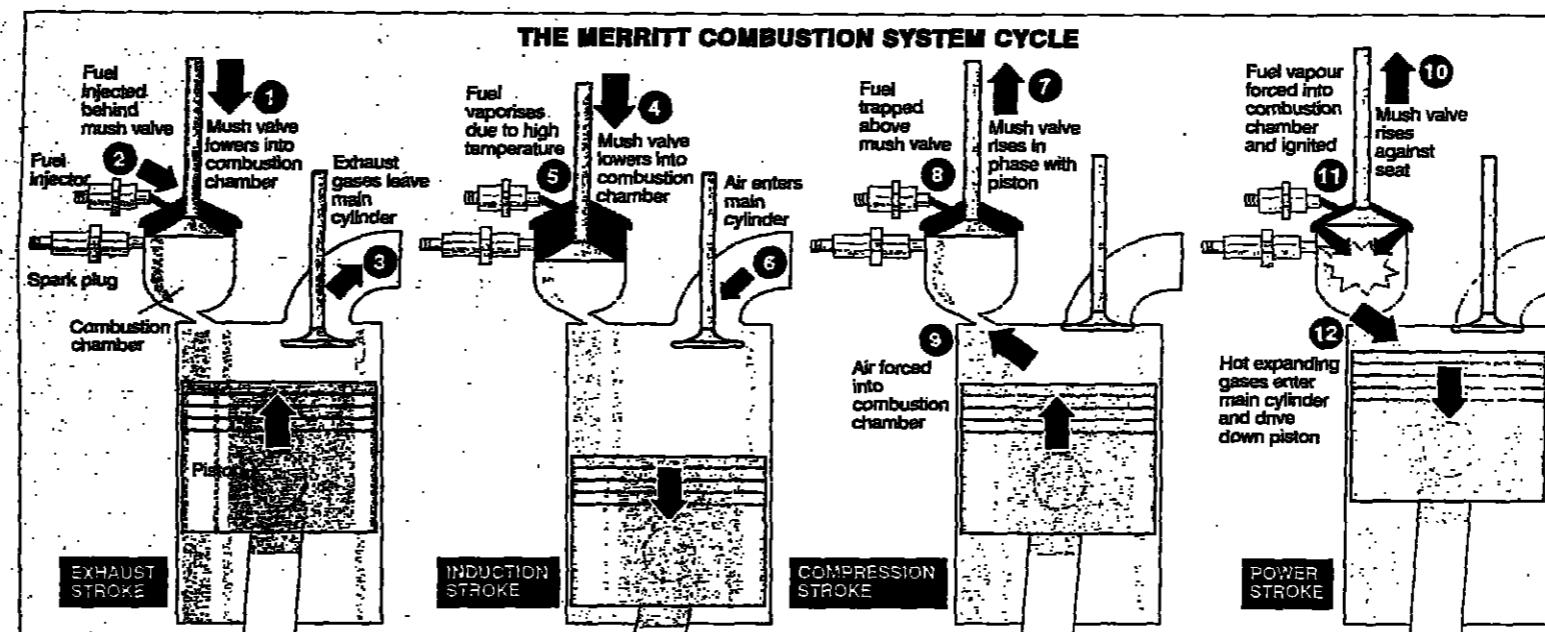
Backed by the legendary Cosworth name, the Merritt engine offers a double bonus, says Hugh Hunston

Conceiving, designing and building a petrol engine which is markedly more economical and cleaner than state-of-the-art diesel units could add the name Merritt to those of Otto, Diesel and Wankel in the internal combustion Hall of Fame.

In conjunction with Coventry University and Cosworth Engineering, Dan Merritt believes his invention can win the "very, very big prize" of doubling the distance covered for each gallon consumed by a conventional petrol car while creating a cleaner motoring environment.

By the end of this year Cosworth, better known for high performance, high-tech motorsport engines, hopes to have the Merritt Cycle engine running a nondescript family hatchback. The fact that Cosworth's advanced research and development unit in Northampton has become involved, by buying rights to develop the power plant to a production stage, has added corporate credibility to Dr Merritt's aspirations.

The technology is housed in a one-cylinder, 440cc testbed unit with the object of refining it to the point of adding three



ton's parallel four (induction, compression, ignition and exhaust) strokes. It first moves down as fuel enters the main cylinder above.

This happens during the exhaust stroke, as the main piston rises and expels exhaust gases. As the engine draws in air during induction, the special valve continues to move down and the fuel vapourises into a very rich fuel/air mixture.

During upward compression stroke, the valve-shaped piston also moves up, and pushes the mixture into the

combustion chamber, where it is ignited by a conventional spark plug and the hot expanding gas forces down the piston on power stroke.

By separating the fuel mixture and compressed air until the last, or optimum, moment before combustion, the process makes for far more efficient burning of fuel. This results in a marked improvement in mechanical efficiency. This gives the fuel a faster burn rate, releasing energy more rapidly.

Ironically, the PhD research project was started 12 years ago on igniting fuel with a platinum catalyst on the walls of a combustion chamber. It has resulted in a system that eliminates the need for a precious metal catalytic converter. It promises to expel virtually no particulates, which have been linked with cancer, while the amount of hydrocarbons or unburnt fuel is significantly lower than conventional petrol counterparts.

Cosworth insiders, who hope to have an operational vehicle running early next year, believe Merritt-powered vehicles could be on sale between five and ten years from now. Dr Merritt puts the timescale at nearer four years, adding: "What it really

comes down to is how badly the car makers want it."

"Even if the engine was not superior on the emissions front, which it is, the potential of going twice the distance on the same fuel is a major environmental benefit."

Halving pollution — on the fuel consumed basis alone — is a prime motivator when the explosion of car ownership in emerging nations requires radical environmental solutions. An average small car, returning 30mpg over 10,000 miles a year, spews out 3.5 tons of carbon dioxide.

Dr Merritt and his Cosworth colleagues are wary about predicting the scale of projected fuel savings, with theoretical estimates varying from 30 to 60 per cent of the fuel used by current petrol cars. If it uses half the fuel, it travels double the distance. That could translate into a 70mpg average during stop-start urban use.

Delighted that a British invention is being developed by a leading British engineering firm, Dr Merritt believes the lack of a threat to vested interests surrounding conventional engine technology is an added bonus.

"I suppose if you can go twice the distance on the same fuel then someone will probably double the price of the petrol," he speculated.

Alan Cops on the latest registration plate auctions

A number of ways to get yourself noticed

General N-registration plates, including NI NJA, NI CKY, NI VIVEN and NI XON, most of them are numbers which could have been issued years ago when licensing was in the hands of local authorities, but for one reason or another were never used. The top lot, on estimates at least, is £1 at £18,000-plus, which might have been handed out in rural Somerset.

Byron Roberts, who leads the DVLA's "Sale of Marks" marketing team, says: "There are two types of registrations on sale. The affordable marks, which people can request through our telephone sales service, and those we choose to auction. These are a bit special."

The Brooks sale includes several numbers appealing to owners of particular cars. Apart from the PSO for a Ferrari, there is 10 TUS for anyone

who feels a Porsche Turbo needs further enhancement, NSX 1 for a Honda owner and 1 TR for a Triumph enthusiast.

But if you'd prefer a car, the twin Minis are in a Christie's sale at the Jack Barclay Showrooms in London SW8 that also includes a classic restoration project, the dismembered parts of the 1934 Aston Martin Ulster driven by Prince Birabonge Bhupandit of Siam, the amateur racing driver who preferred to be known as

B. Bira. The Ulster is regarded as the height of Aston's pre-war racing development. And if you are looking for a way to mark the centenary of the British motor industry, then Brooks also has a sale at Olympia next Thursday that includes one of the oldest cars around: an 1894 two-seater Benz Velo L5hp. A veteran of many a London to Brighton run, it carries an estimate of £55,000-£60,000 and comes with the impressive number plate A 6.

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DR DASHBOARD

Dangers of a bull market

Q How did bull bars, those metal frames on the front of 4WD vehicles, originate?

A They began as "roo bars" in Australia or "moose bars" in the US to protect vehicles travelling in remote areas in the event of collision with animals. It seems that kangaroos and moose lack any road sense and hitting one at speed can do a lot of damage to car and driver — as well as to the animal.

Q So are they useful here or just fashion accessories?

A Well, it's difficult to think of anywhere in Britain where the wildlife is big enough to merit such precautions. There might be some justification for using them off the road, but on the road they really are just decoration.

Q Surely if you are hit by a 4WD you're going to get hurt bars or not?

A That's true. But concern voiced by the Transport Research Laboratory centres mainly on children. The top bars are just about head height for a youngster and the fear is that the protruding bar will cause far more damage than the bonnet of a vehicle, which usually slopes back. Tests suggest that a child could be killed by a 12mph collision with a bar, while it could survive a 25mph collision otherwise.

Q But I thought I'd read about a dispute over that research?

A According to the RAC, the real annual death toll from accidents involving bars could be 70. The TRL report, due out next month, may suggest about half that figure. It seems the TRL's research was partly based on a survey of police forces and only 30 of the 50 asked to provide data responded.

Q What is the view of the people who make these things? Are they concerned?

A The Association of Protector Bar Manufacturers say they have seen the police reports and do not support the alarm. Only five pedestrian deaths could be directly blamed on the bars. Of the others, the speed and circumstances of the accident indicated that it would have been fatal whether the vehicle was fitted with bars or not.

Q I thought there were moves last year to get them banned?

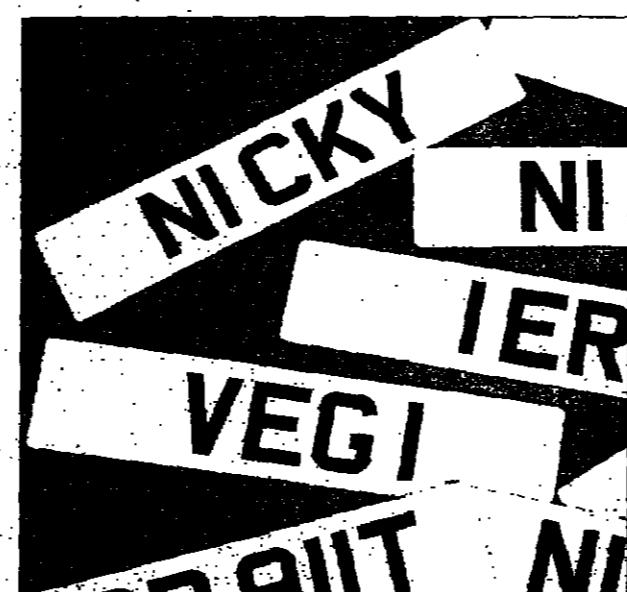
A Right. Last year a number of MPs campaigned for a ban, backed by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and even John Major expressed his concern. A Bill to ban them has been introduced in the House of Lords and on Wednesday a similar Ten-minute Rule Bill was put before the Commons by the Labour MP Paul Flynn. But such measures rarely become law.

Q If there is so much opposition to them, what is the problem?

A It appears that, however much concern there is here, we can't take action until the EC decides to introduce a ban. The European Parliament has voted for one, but that has yet to be turned into legislation.

Q But surely the manufacturers don't have to wait for a change in the law if there is so much concern?

A Right again. Some manufacturers, including Mitsubishi, Suzuki and Ford, have already introduced "deformable" bars made of softer material. These give on impact and cause far less damage.



Well-lettered: there's even one that the Queen might like

Made in Britain, it became a benchmark of excellence. Hilton Holloway marks the passing of a Rover classic



Last exit from Solihull for what became a favoured hunting vehicle of sheiks, an Anglophilic status symbol in America, all-purpose transport in the Shires, a lifestyle statement in prosperous suburbs — and made Margaret Thatcher do a U-turn

At precisely 11am on Thursday of this week, a select few people witnessed the death of a classic. Not any classic, but an icon of British design that changed the face of world motoring and still influences carmakers all over the globe.

The Range Rover is finally making way at Land Rover's Solihull factory for the hugely popular Discovery and hi-tech new model Range Rover. Surely no other car has invented a market sector, become a status symbol and has still been regarded as unbeatable 26 years later?

The Range Rover was a peculiarly British success story. It was born out of the instincts of a small number of engineers and became as much a symbol of the British way of life as the faded country house and Barbour jacket. Even the formidable Margaret Thatcher was caught out by the country's love for it. The lady had to make an unshaded U-turn when plans leaked out in 1986 that her

government wanted to sell state-owned Land Rover to General Motors.

Three men who created the legend were Rover engineers Gordon Bashford and Spen King and Rover stylist David Bache. However, the foresight of the Rover company bosses Maurice and Spencer Wilks was remarkable. They set out as far back as the early 1950s to create a luxurious, but versatile, version of its spartan Land Rover, primarily for road use. It was called the Road-Rover.

Wilks, Bashford, King and Bache struggled long and hard through the 1950s to try and perfect the style of the Road-Rover. According to Spen King: "It was a jolly nice vehicle. I had a Road-Rover, and in its early forms it was very good indeed." It came close to production, but in 1960

the whole project was abandoned.

Then, in the early 1960s, the company sent Graham Banock, one of the Land Rover team, to America to conduct some formal market research. He returned convinced that the next big thing would be four-wheel drive vehicles for leisure use. "I've spoken to Graham about this," says King, "and it was a remarkable coincidence. He came up with the same conclusion we did — we needed to build a car like the Range Rover."

Finally, they had the right formula — a luxury Land Rover, using the chassis and four-wheel drive running gear. By 1966 the project had found its feet and, after experimenting with various transmissions, they settled on the famous long-travel suspension and permanent four-wheel



One to remember: an icon that changed world motoring

drive that would establish the car's long reign as off-road king.

Dubbed the 100-inch Station Wagon, the next stroke of genius was the timeless styling. This was not originally

the slick work of a stylist's pen, but a creation of Bashford and King. "Actually, I don't see the styling as being that important," says King. "It probably took up less than 2 per cent of our time." Their prototype was

then tweaked by Bache into the shape we know now: elegant, timeless and never equalled. The Range Rover finally went on sale in 1970.

It was launched in the rugged surroundings of the Blue Hills Mine at St Agnes, Cornwall, and in 1972 the British Trans-America expedition used it to cross the continent through the Darien Gap, the first vehicle to make the journey. Two years later it completed a 7,500-mile West to East crossing of the Sahara in 100 days, and in 1981 a Range Rover was outright winner of the Paris-Dakar rally. In the Middle East it became the favoured hunting vehicle of sheiks, in the US an Anglophilic status symbol, in the Shires it was an all-purpose vehicle, in Britain's prosperous suburbs a lifestyle statement.

It is a testament to the rightness of the original design that it remained practically unaltered right into the 1990s, although subtle improvements were made.

King was honoured by Land Rover in 1990 when it released a special edition "CSK" (Charles Spencer King) version. He is still very much occupied with engineering through his own company, Spen King Associates. When asked what he thinks of the all-new Range Rover, particularly that car's controversial appearance, he is unexpectedly positive: "My wife and I were lent one when we were on holiday in the States, where it stood out as a distinctive and likeable vehicle." But he will concede that the new Range Rover "looks a little too like Japanese rivals, and it will not last as long as the original".

The Range Rover has been exhibited at the Louvre as an exemplar of modern industrial design and was widely praised for its export achievements: more than 60 per cent of production regularly went overseas. With typical reticence, King will admit to the Range Rover being his greatest achievement in a distinguished career, "although of course it was shared with others. It probably had the best effect on our balance of payments of anything I was involved in".

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And is King sad to see the end of the Range Rover? "Well, I'm a bit sad, but I'm not weeping." He is, he says, far more interested in the future than the past.

End of a Range of 26 years

THE NEW MAZDA
626

Good news
0345 48 48 15

Bad news
0345 48 48 16

Don't know
Tell me more about
the new upgraded
Mazda 626

0345 48 48 49



(mazda) > (the rest)